



## **Process Drawing**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Riet Eeckhout

Architect

School of Architecture and Design

RMIT University

November 2014





**Declaration**

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis/project is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Riet Eeckhout

12 March 2015



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Supervisors:

Dr. Martyn Hook RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

Dr. Richard Black RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

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### **Acknowledgements:**

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of others in this work.

I would like to thank my supervisor Martyn Hook for his guidance, patience and support in the process;  
Leon van Schaik for his invitation to participate in the stream and for his enduring support over the past 10 years.

I would like to thank my partner and husband, Ephraim Joris. After 15 years of collaboration my work is inextricably connected to him and his work. Without his support and sacrifice, I would not be where I now stand.

I'd like to express my gratitude to my partners at Architecture Project: Konrad Buhagiar, David Felice, Alberto Micheli-Farrugia, David Drago and Ephraim Joris, for their thrust and support over the past 15 years.

Thank you to all my collaborators, teachers and students, there have been many in Belgium, Malta, Malaysia, London and Australia with whom I gratefully had the opportunity to interact and/or work with. In particular with regards to the work presented in this document, I would like to thank Ephraim Joris, Jon Tarry, Kyveli Anastassia, Sakiko Kohashi, Anna Baranowska and Marc Godts for their invaluable contribution.

Finally I would like to thank my late mother and my father for their support in all my endeavours.

The production of this ADR is supported by RMIT school of Architecture & Design through the SRC funds and through allocated research time by KULeuven, Faculteit Architectuur Campus St-Lucas (LUCA)

The ADR text has been edited by Rebecca Roke







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*Process Drawing*

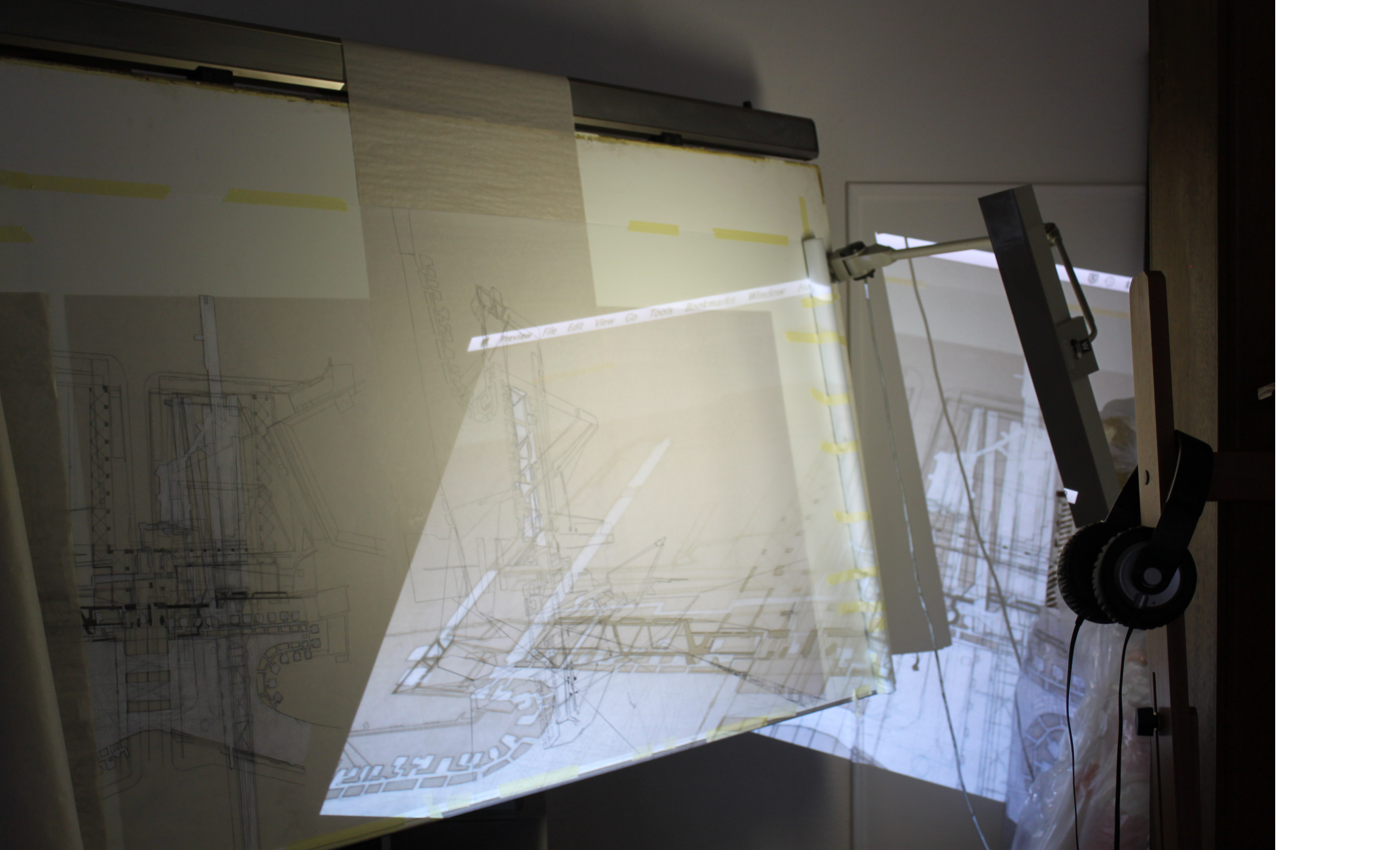
Introduction

This doctorate is conducted within the framework of the Invitational Reflective Practice Stream at RMIT University outlining the research method as reflection through projects. Although the content of his PhD is ingrained in an intense architecture practice covering a building practice, a research practice and an educational practice of the past 15 years, this doctorate limits itself to a section of the work I do as an architect and the research projects are products of the past four years. Through the particular process of this PhD stream, the past four years have sharpened and propelled a synergy between the different sections of this practice. First of all by having the PhD framework as a critical corroborative audience to the work produced, secondly by its induction of a critical awareness of the embedded tacit knowledge deeply rooted into the practitioner evidenced by the work, and thirdly by allowing this critical awareness to crystallize in all sections of the practice.

**I speak about what I know; I draw what I cannot speak about just yet**  
This research is conducted through drawing. I explore and reflect on subjects through making observational hand drawings. This aspect of my practice developed from observational hand drawing, with an awareness of the subjectivity of the standpoint, to an investigation that explores the ambiguity of what I see and how I represent those observations. I use hand drawing to spend time with something, be it a site, a subject or an object. I use hand drawing to engage with the complexity of what is visible. I use hand drawing to speculate on the nature of an object or subject and I explore through speculative drawing how I can activate their presence.

Drawing is used as a research tool to find something out, a tool for reflection.







**The complexity of the observed**

The research is based on the search for spatial content of a site, situation or event whereby these self initiated projects outline a particular consistency based on the subjectivity and ambiguity of critical observation. What is it that I see? What do I filter and register of the observed? What is my standpoint and how does it relate to the observed object? Process drawing takes this to a level where the relationship between the observed and observer becomes performative or speculative. The act of design in that ‘space’, is deeply entrenched within the complexity of the specific situation.

This practice is concerned with the relationship and extends boundaries between observation, registration and representation.

More specifically, **the projects uncover an awareness of and investigate acts of design in-between observation, registration and representation.**

It is the performative space in-between observation, registration and representation that I find of interest and crucial for the poiesis of a project. The fact that this performative space in-between is saturated with subjectivity based on ambiguous presumptions (what is it that you see?) forces one in an attempt to find ‘devices’ to hold on to: the search for inherent consistencies within the mechanics of this subjective spatial world.

These devices I park under the activity of ‘Process Drawing’.

**Process Drawing is a verb in the present continuous.**

Process drawing, is an action in the here and now. It refers to a drawing process that is generative and process-driven in nature and is used as a tool to observe and to speculate on spatial intend.

In the duration of the PhD, this research shifted from a study of the spatial production, to a study of the process of the spatial production. End results of projects are seen as intermediate steps forward, unpacking an aspect of the research embedded within the investigation. I’ve investigated what it is that I draw, and brought it in relation with what I know. Drawing is used as a generative procedure instead of a representational one. This document wants to reflect what the process has been: a PhD by drawing.

**The structure of this document**

The structure of this document is intending to gradually introduce to the reader the content of the presented research through a series of projects produced in the time span between 2010 and 2014.

The documents take you firstly to the outline of the nature of project sites I operate on and the introduction of the site as a situation with a temporal nature; secondly the circumstantial nature of a situation articulating its specificity and thirdly this document explores the notion of point of view towards the circumstantial situation.

The document has four chapters.

(Part1) The first chapter ‘*The Field Drawing*’ refers to the device of the ‘Field’ that isolates elements found on the site and lets them establish relationships between each other: the drawing instigates a relational environment. The Field Drawing collects information referred to as site conditions and operates as an expanded definition of a site drawing.

(Part2) The second chapter ‘*The complexity of the specific*’ draws the attention to the importance of the specific content of observations and the tools I have devised for the speculative production to remain rooted in observed specificity of the site.

(Part3) In the Third chapter ‘*Circumstantial explorations*’ I engage the reader with the depth and nature of the found complexity from a specific point of view.

(Part4) The fourth chapter ‘*The Ground That Speaks of The Figure’s passing*’ expands on Figure/Ground studies: from figurative to figural.

**The nature of this document: PhD by drawing**

Writing and speaking about the drawing grounds, clarifies and articulates meaning, but the motor behind the production of knowledge in this research is the act of drawing. The drawing takes place in a very different ‘environment’ than writing. Words themselves are a representation of its content, and therefore by the premise of this PhD, there are acts of design between what is observed of this practice and how I translate this into words.

The interest for this document has been to get these words to come as close as possible to what the drawings are. Text operates as annotation to the drawing rather than the drawing taking on an illustrative roll in the text.



### Field drawing

In this chapter I will expand on the nature of the project sites that I work on as an architect and the conditions found on these sites.

Due to the nature of the ‘site conditions’ I have collected in hand drawings, a more accurate title for them is field drawings. The field drawing can accommodate broader information than a site drawing. A field drawing collapses time and space, and the scale and nature of the drawing is allowed to change where it is deemed relevant to do so.

### Point of View

Secondly, this chapter explains the importance of describing how I look at project sites: the notion of *Point of View* or *Standpoint*. My interest in understanding site conditions is drawn from the experience of space. In this respect I refer to Henry Lefebvre’s term ‘Perceived Space’. [02]

As architects we are used to drawing Conceived space [02] space, in absolute measured terms: plan, section and elevation, all relative to a point of reference in the world. And this is as well how we regard form: in absolute measurable terms. I am interested to look at form from a point of view. Space is conceptualised as conceived space until a person steps into the room. From that moment on, space is experienced and perceived: an all important performative environment is generated between the observer and the observed. It is that performative space where I would like to contextualise my research work.

The performative space between the observer and the observed is my work area; it is that space that I activate when I draw.

[02] Lefebvre, H. (1991) The Production of Space, (trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith); Oxford, Blackwell Publishing.









### The nature of project sites

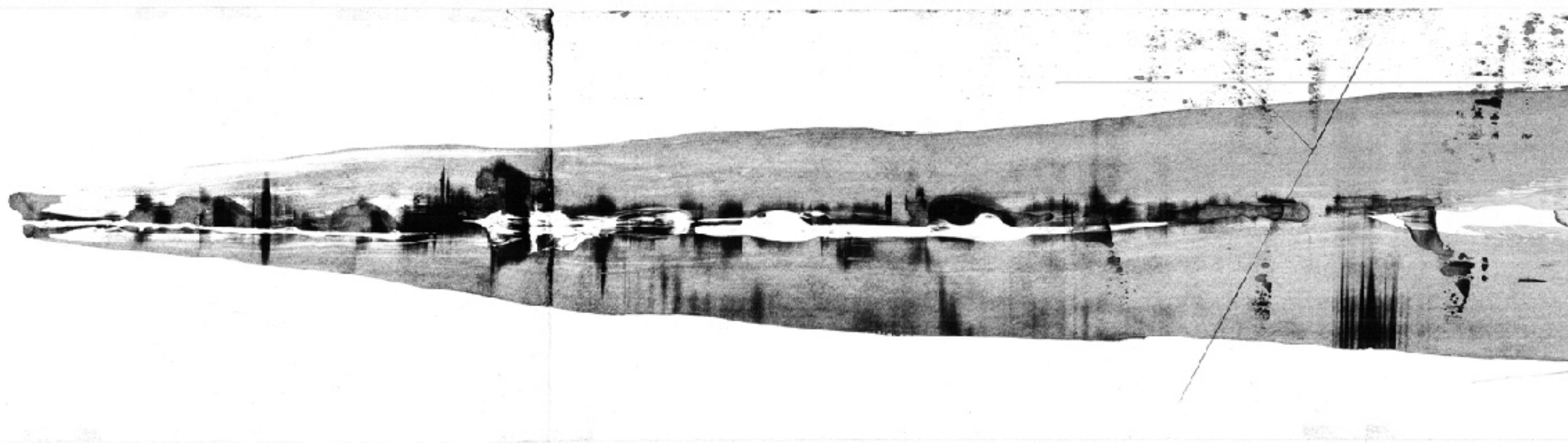
In my work, the *site* is the pretext and context I take into account as the perimeter of study. I refer to the site as a situation or event, due to the active and dynamic role of site conditions throughout my work. The word 'situation' seems to be more in touch with the complex, performative nature of place and place making.

The sites in my work range from physical places, to demolition sites, art work, photographs, a film fragment, or some one else's drawing.

Through hand drawing, I observe and document these situations, which I consider might hold an aspect of what I am interested in.

Observing through drawing is a way to spend time with the object and subject of interest.

Project site for 'Drawing Out Collapse': stills from fragment of the film 'Prix d'Amour', a film by Jon Tarry





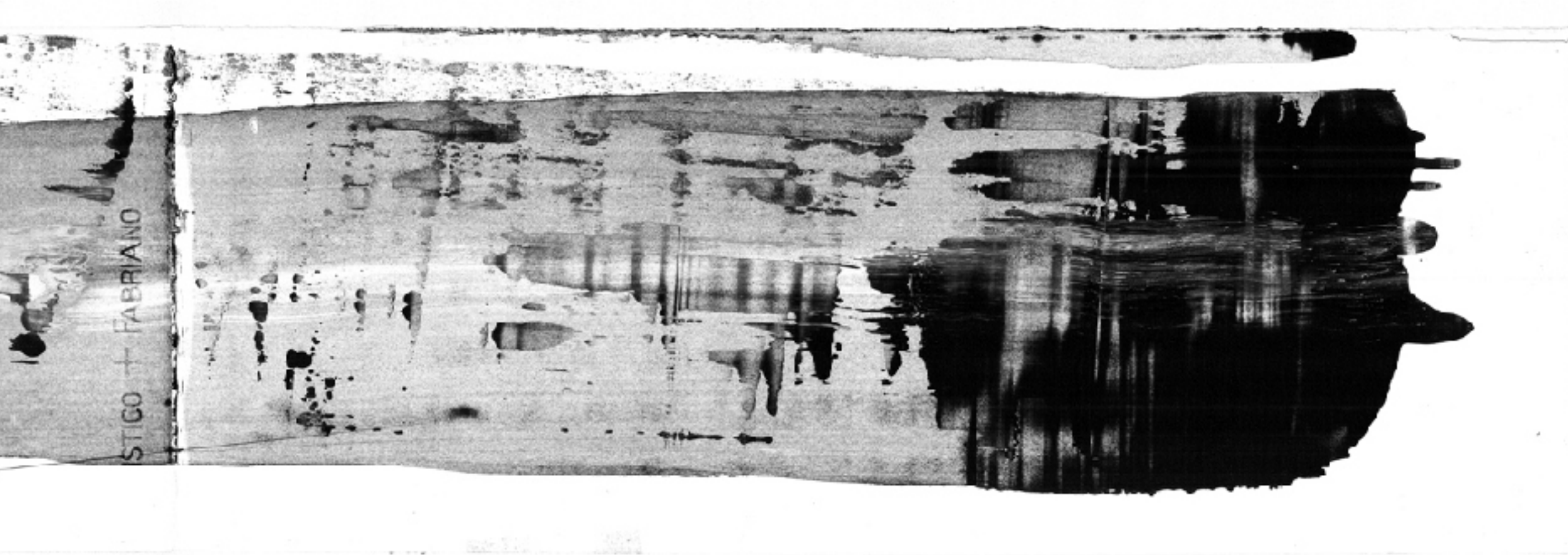
There is a situation (\*) I am looking at, and I am calling it a site.

It is a site for investigation.

I think I figured out its physicality, its boundaries and I know it is of interest.

I am investigating it because I would like to understand this site better.

I would like to come closer to an understanding of its workings, its content and its form.



(\*) Project site for 'Lines Of Resistance'; 1800mm by 350mm; Ink screed on paper by Jon Tarry, 2012





## The Field Conditions

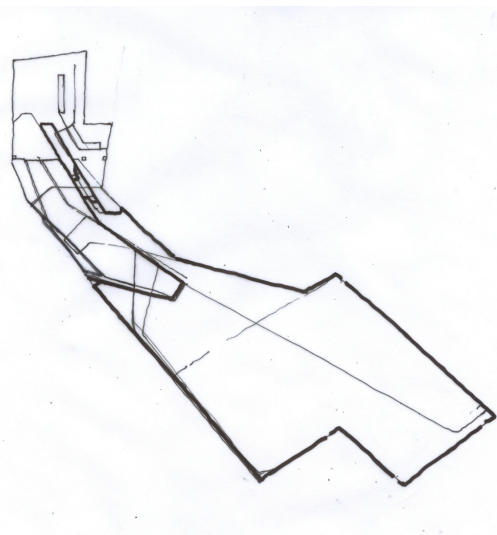
I would like to refer to the term *Field Condition* [01] in reference to what Stan Allen describes as a bottom-up phenomena, defined not by over arching geometrical schemas but by intricate local connections. In this instance, form matters, but not so much the forms of things as the forms between things [01].

I collect aspects of what I see at my drawing table. There, all the elements that I have picked up find a position in relation to one another.

I call those picked-up elements Field Conditions. [01] They are elements that characterise or condition the situation. The field drawing is a drawing that collects these field conditions and allows them to perform in consecutive drawings.

## Disposition of the Elements

When establishing a field drawing, the field conditions articulate a certain disposition by which they start to perform in the field. The word 'disposition' [2] is useful here for the potency it conveys. 'Disposition' holds the possibility – if not the inevitability – of change.



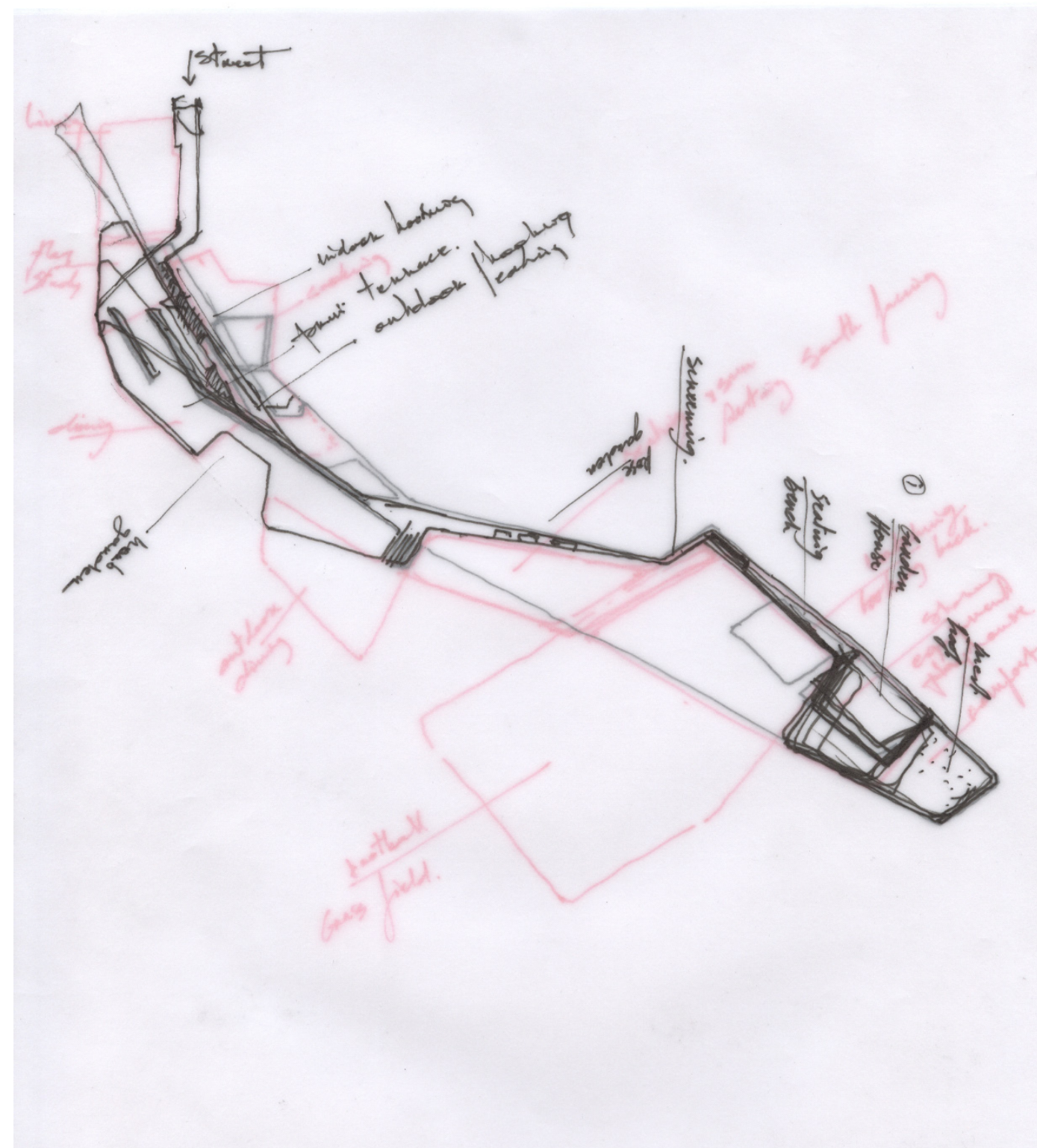
When establishing the field drawing through the drawing process, field conditions are collected and activated to perform: they find their position in the field and in their internal relationship between parts of the drawing.

The field condition drawing establishes what I refer to as a relational environment. This is an environment where elements that I have picked up exist in relation to one another.

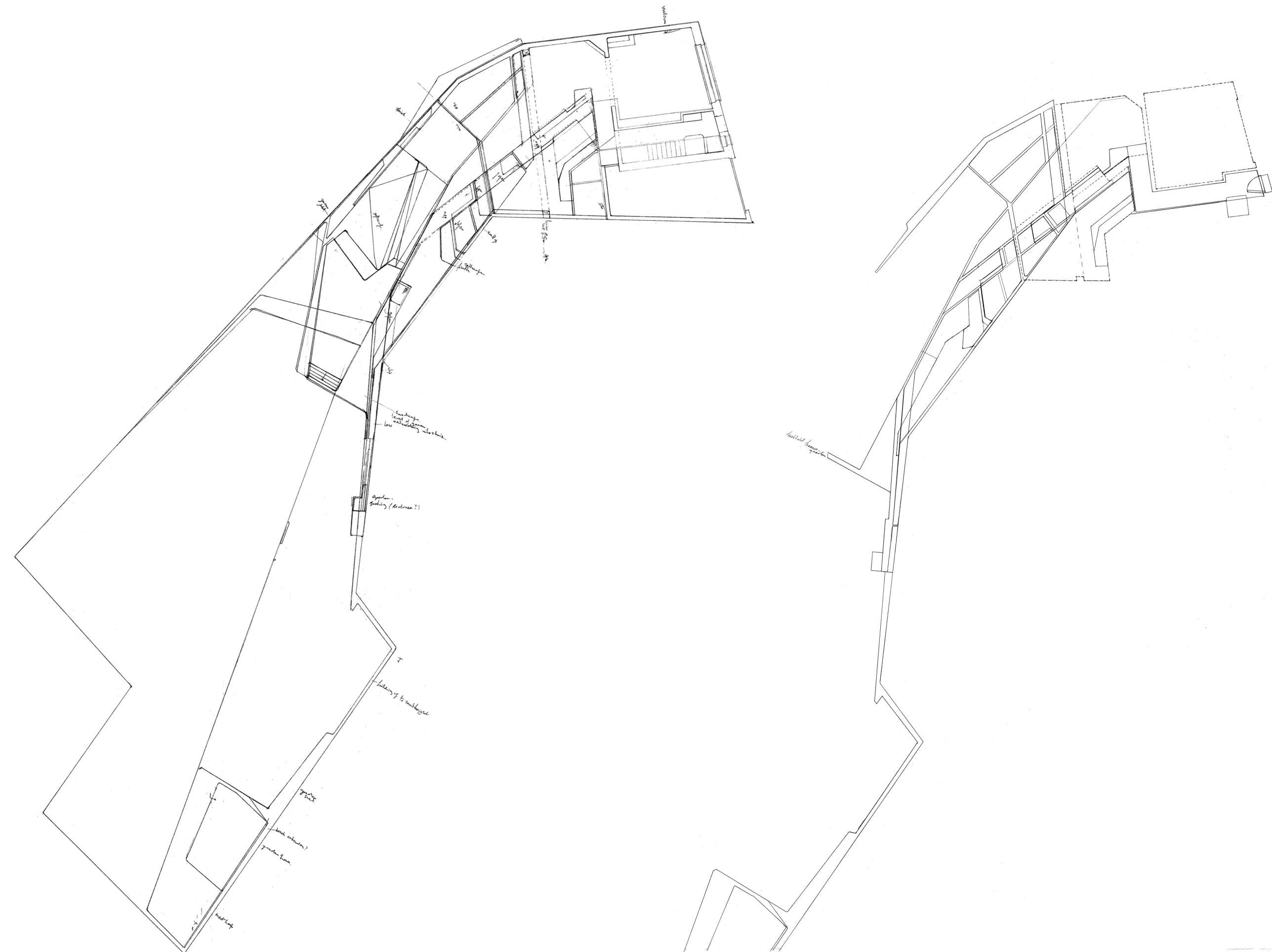
Bringing elements together in a drawing sets in motion a process I describe as *process drawing*.

[01] Stan Allen, *Points+ Lines, Diagrams and Projects for the city*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1999, page 92]

[02] Disposition: a state of readiness; a property that consists not in the present state of an object, but in its propensity to change in a certain way under certain conditions, as brittleness which consists in the propensity to break when struck; [dictionary.reference.com/disposition]



*Initial field condition sketch for CILY House project; an overlay of territories, programmatic zones and investigation of conditions such as the edge conditions, existing spatial elements and terrain movements.*



The activation of the field happens through both drawing and model making processes where multiple repetitions and iterations occur until the disposition of the whole becomes 'forceful' and starts making sense.

#### The performance of drawing

*Process Drawing* is characterized by a constant meandering between the consciousness or hunch about an object and its contained discourse, and the concept of understanding through making and drawing the object. [01]

This falls back to a search for the content of form.

The content of form holds resolution and potency to perform in turn.

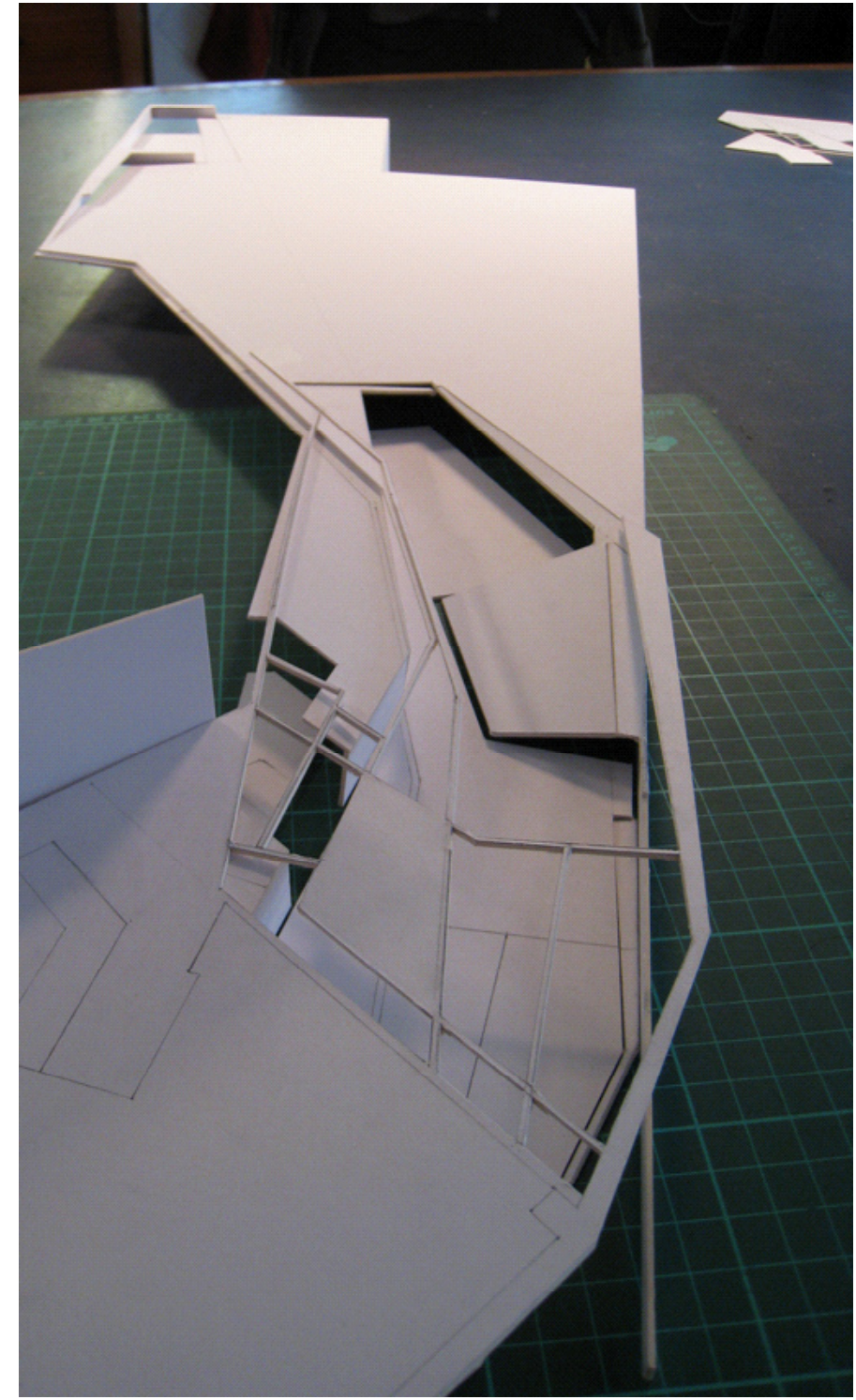
[01] Van Schaik, L. Spooner, M. (2011) *The Practice of Practice 2 - Research in the Medium of Design*, RMIT University Press; page 62, *The Performance of Drawing* by Riet Eeckhout

*CILY house subsequent field drawings*



## Part 1 : The Field Drawing

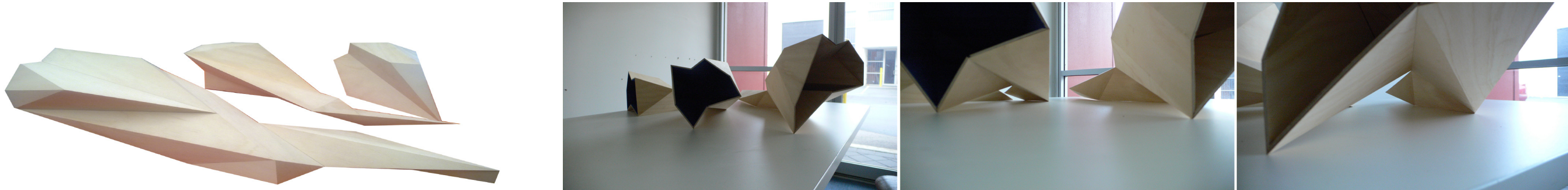
*CILY house models; These models form part of the 'process drawing' procedures: the activation of the field through a haptic process in repetition and iteration.*





The Speculative Depth of the Field

*On Long Call* is a project that is part of a dialogical practice I've established with Jon Tarry. This research practice is based on subsequent exchanges of images, film or text and are described as 'annotated conversations'.



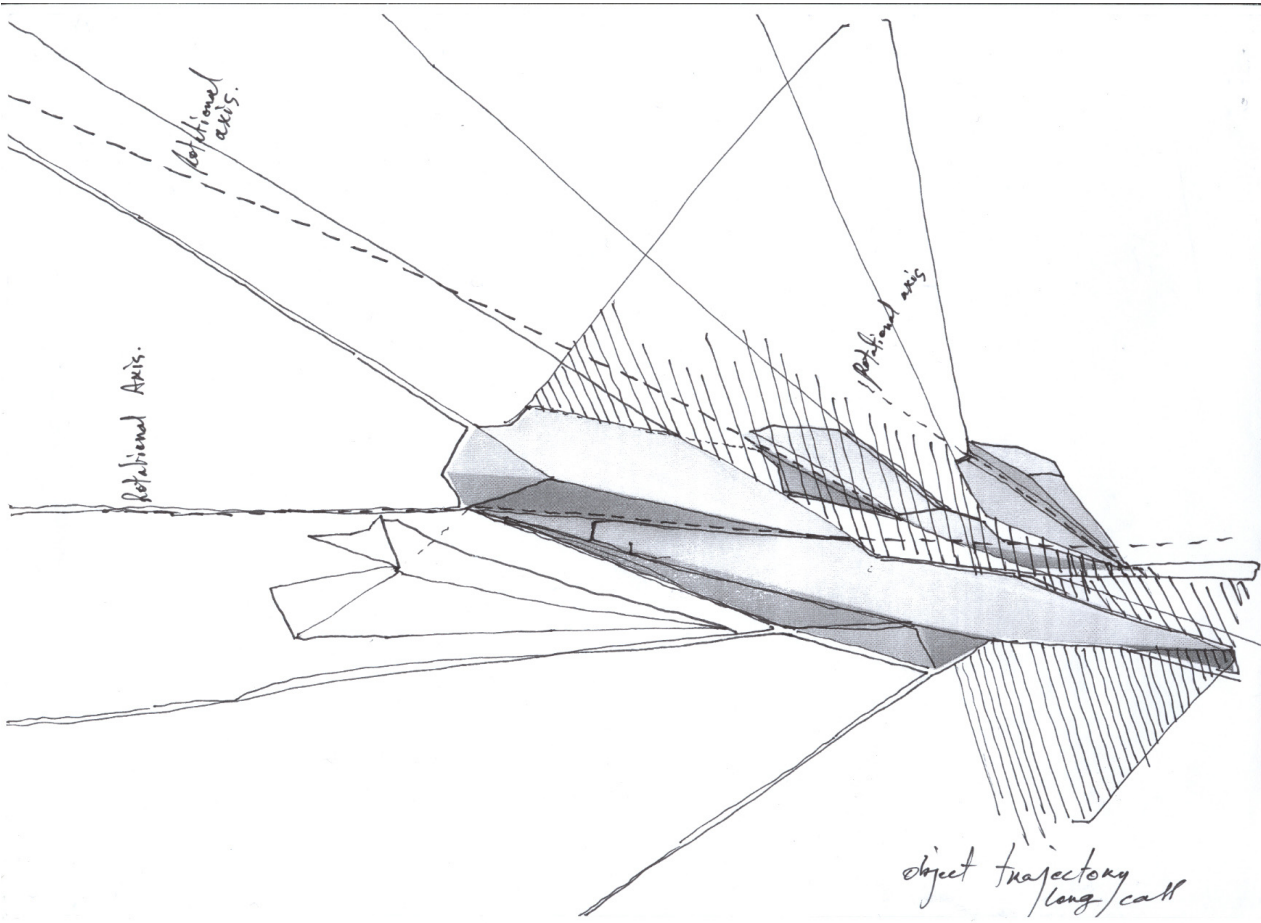
On Long Call's site: four photographs of a sculpture group by Jon Tarry

The site of *On Long Call* comprises four photographs of 'Long Call', a group of three sculptures by Jon Tarry. These photographs are my only source of information with regard to the object's geometry.

When we observe, perceive and subsequently *judge* or register what it is that we're looking at, we make many assumptions that give direction to how we register what we see. When looking at these works, I am assuming various aspects: I am assuming a scale in relation to the presented context; I am assuming a void interior; I am assuming a constant material thickness; I am assuming a surface length in the perspective of the visual geometry; I am assuming the sculptures are closed at the top; I am assuming that there is a top; I am assuming the under croft of the sculptures are interesting; I am assuming an interesting form in its performative relationship to the ground; I am assuming an unexplored interior.

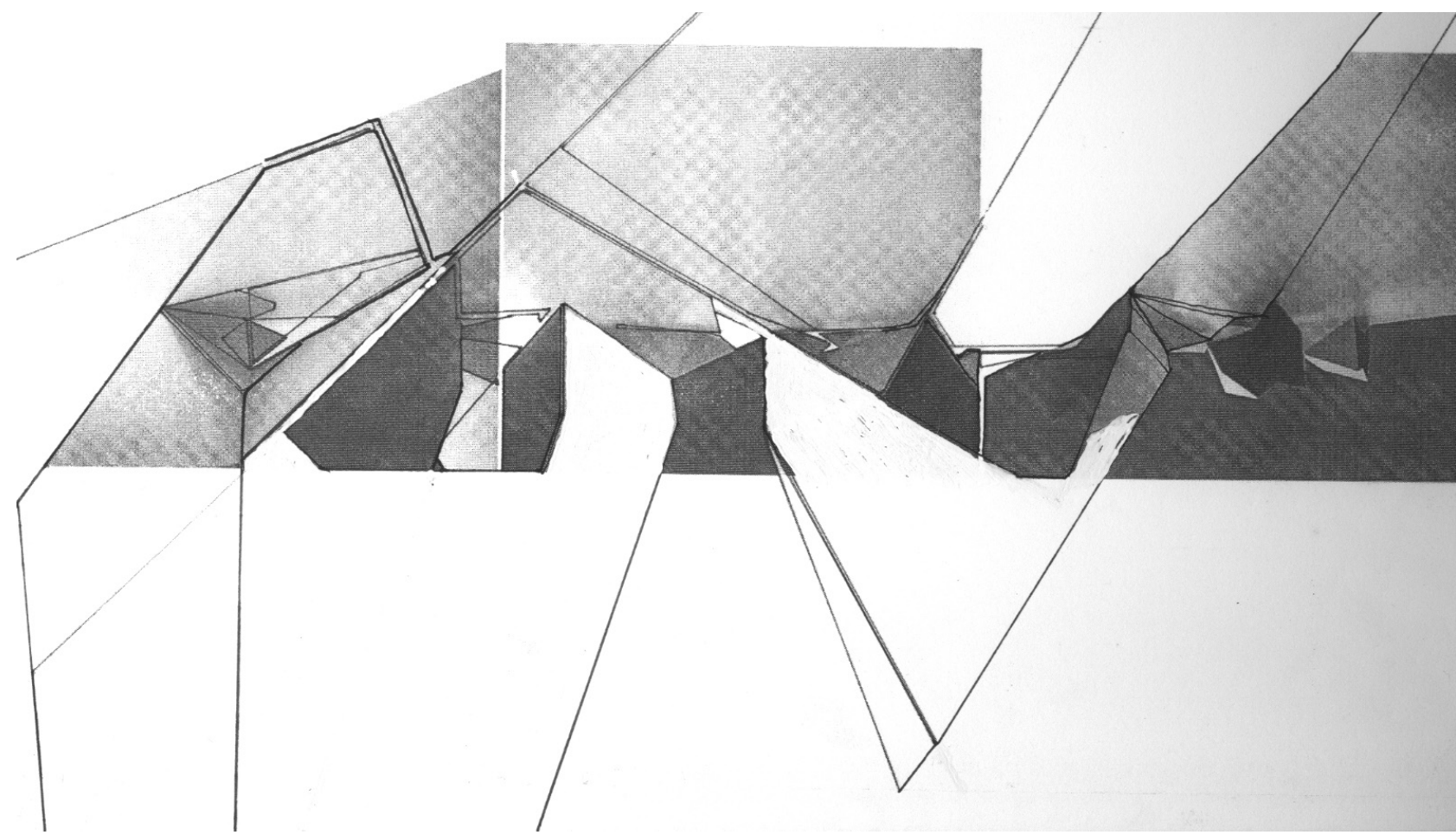
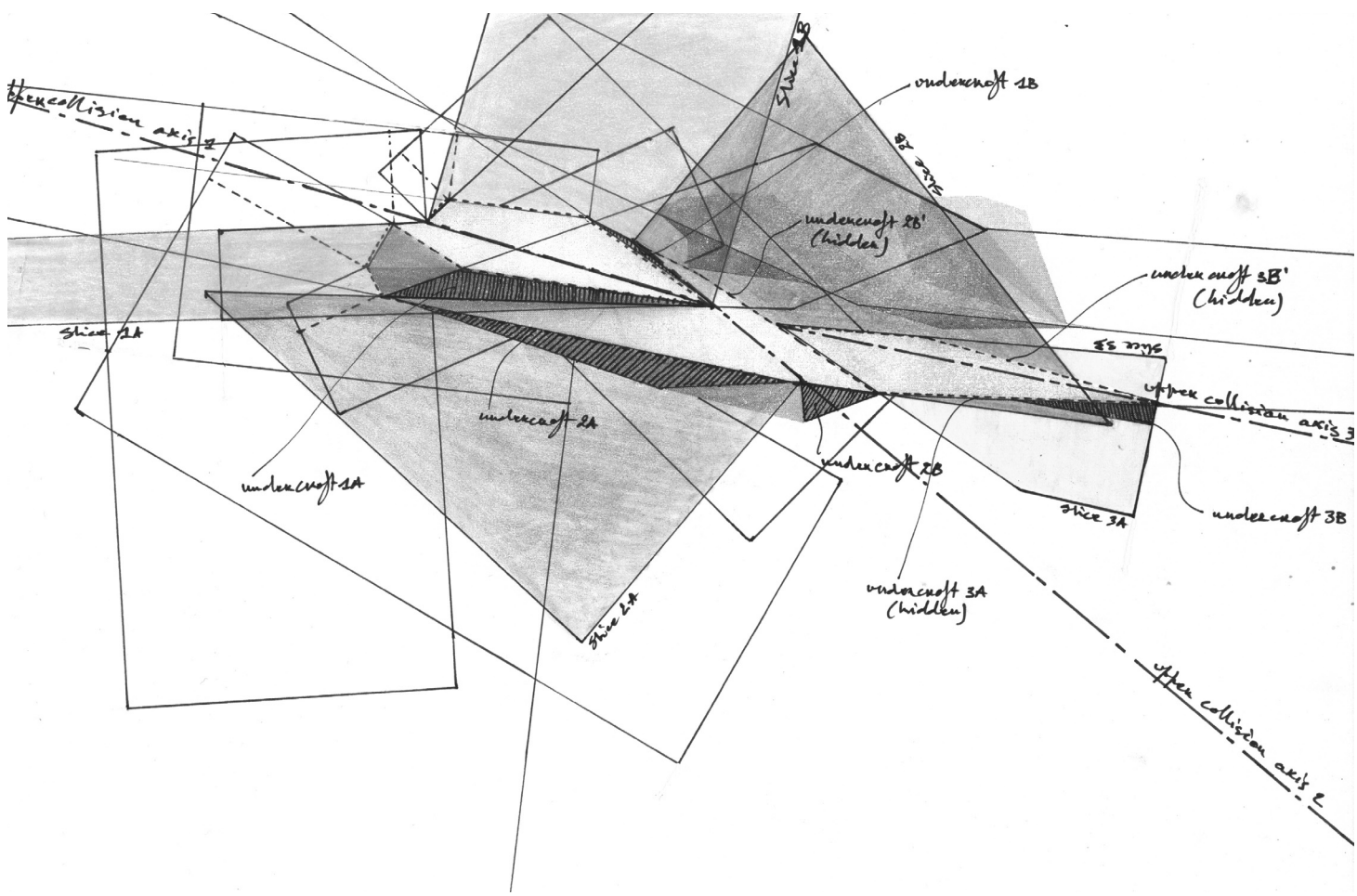
I am aware of some of the assumptions. I decide to hold on to what I know for sure, -the geometry from this point of view - and to speculate on the assumption I am making. I will explore my assumptions instead of leaving them passively direct the process.

The investigation into the field condition takes the shape of a formal analysis of what is visible and what is not visible. The field drawing questions the speculative information we make as we observe and perceive. (To perceive is to become aware of, know, or identify)



Field Drawing for 'On Long Call' exploring object trajectories





Field drawings for 'On Long Call'





### The Unfolded Interior

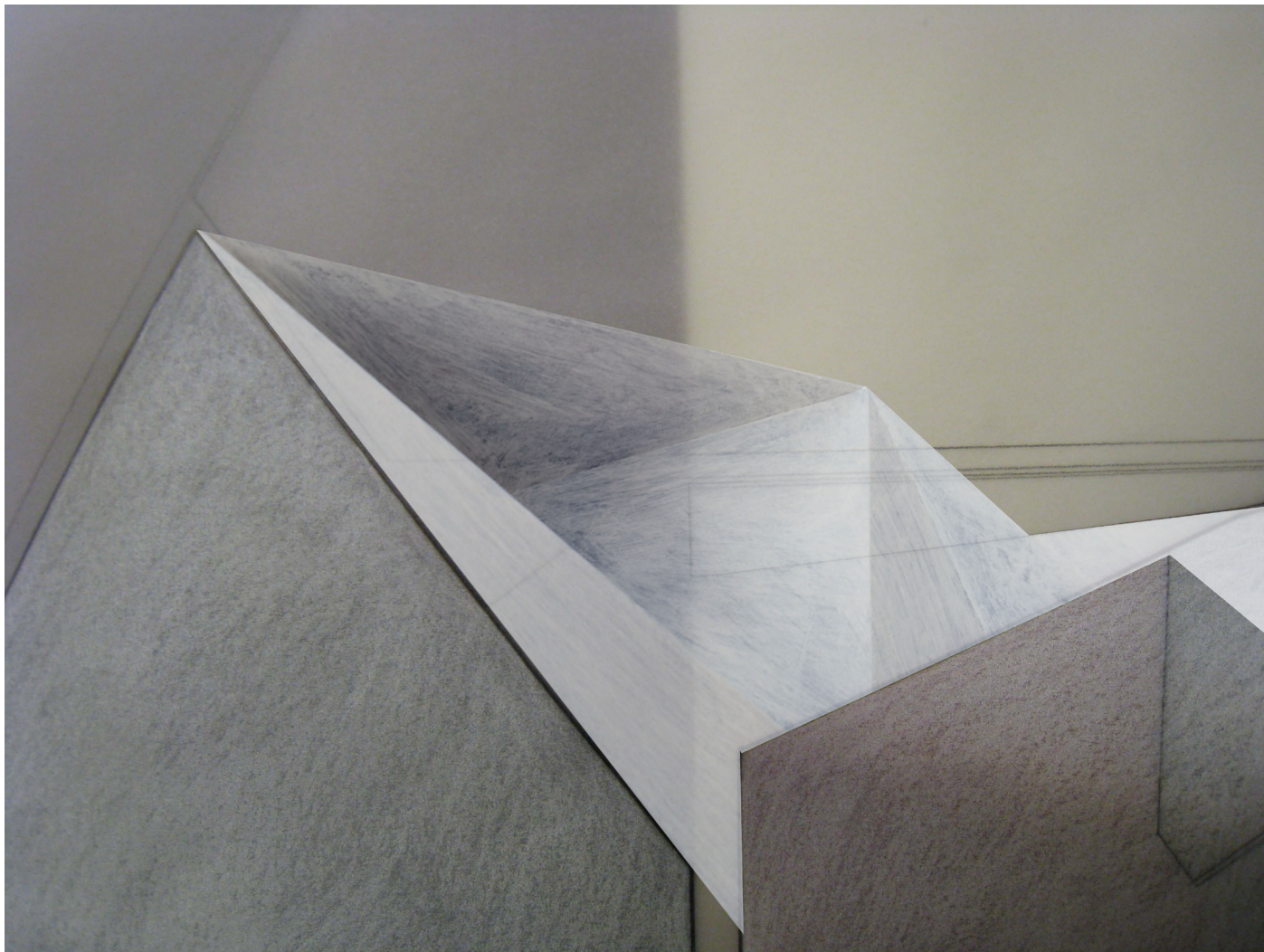
This field drawing unfolds the visual information of a perspectival view of the sculpture.

The information I possess, is in the subjective realm: it deals only with what I think I can see and develops ideas about the information I do not have in hand, such as the interior of these sculptures. The photographs invite a question: from the outside one can see three different objects, but these interiors are connected. *‘What is the interior of this sculpture?’*

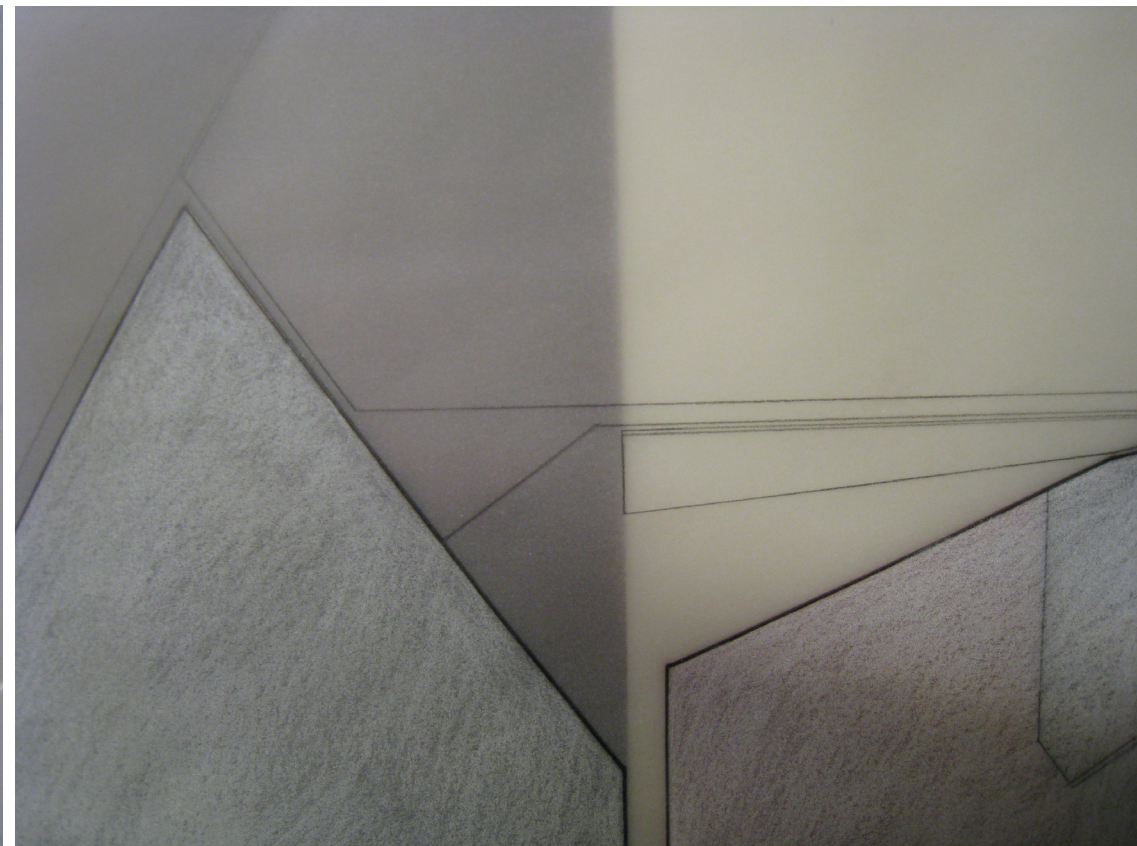
All three sculptures belong together, and are made together. The three interiors are iterations of one. Which *one*? I unfold the visual information available in the image to reveal what these sculptures are iterations of.

The exterior of the objects are sharp and well defined, they are final in their geometry, cut by their maker.





*Drawing overlay by Jon Tarry; Dialogical practice 'On Long Call'*



### **The Field drawing - Interiority**

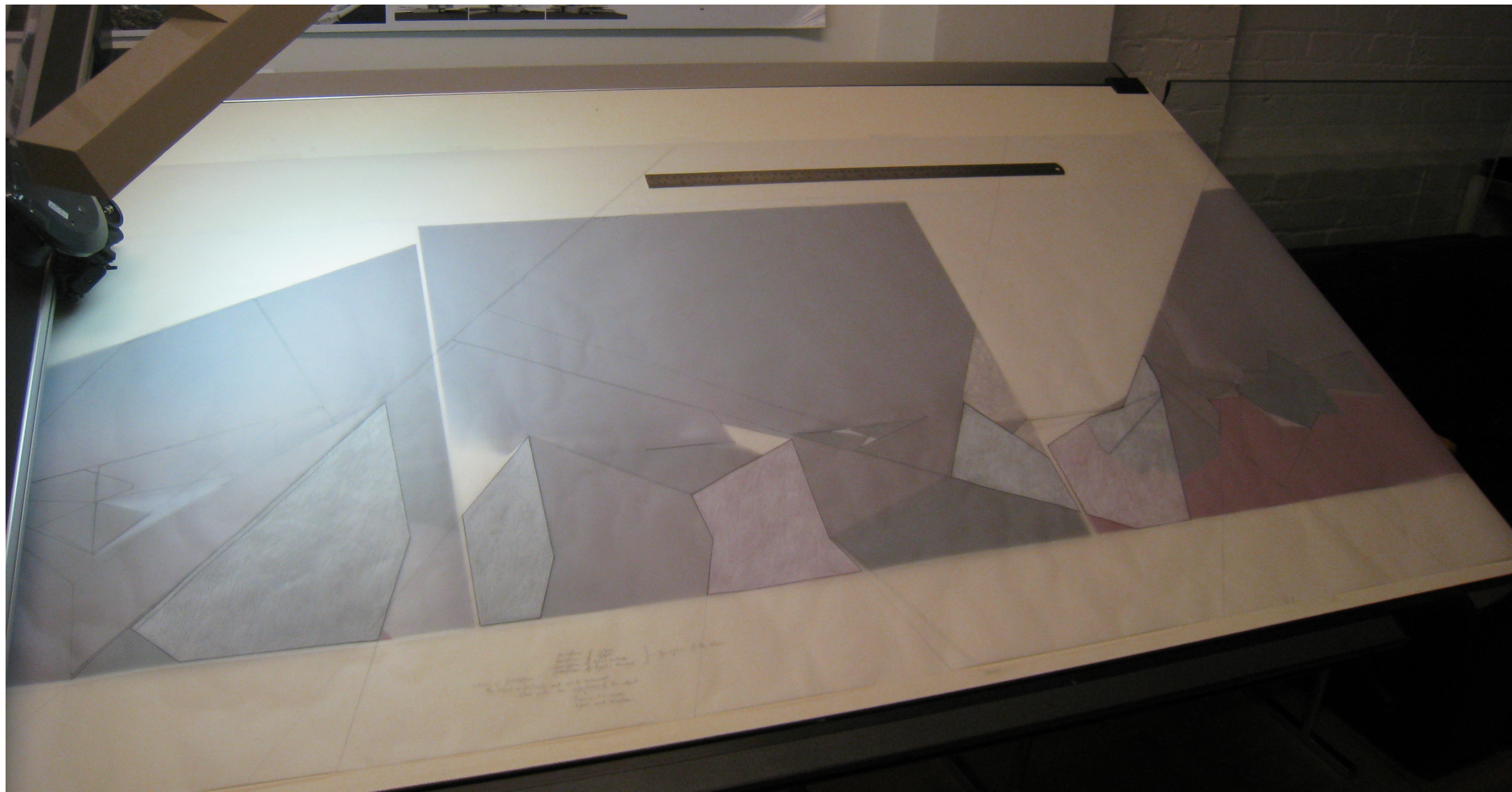
There is an indication of what is visible as supporting surface (under croft) and what is visible as the supported surface (slice). As the eye palpates the visible surface of the sculpture, there is the urge to find an entry point into the object. From here, a speculative process is set into motion that develops a field drawing from the perspectival representations.

The perspective drawing unfolds to expose a sense of interiority. It is a space that proves to be infinitely larger than the exterior first promised [01].

I have put *devices* in place – *ways of doing things*, which are explained further in this document – in order to push the mind away from the familiar and allow it to wonder in speculation for a while. Spending time in a purely speculative environment and building a consistent drawn discourse in that environment is important as it allows distance from what one knows. From this point, you can then step back and relate the speculation to what is already known.

[01] This sense of unexpected space references the notion of the TARDIS (Time And Relative Dimension In Space); a spacecraft in the British science fiction television programme *Doctor Who*. It is interesting to note that the TARDIS reveals much of this 'unpredictability' was actually intentional on its part in order to get the Doctor 'Where *[he]* needed to go' as opposed to where he '*wanted to go*' [ source: [http://tardis.wikia.com/wiki/The\\_Doctor's\\_TARDIS](http://tardis.wikia.com/wiki/The_Doctor's_TARDIS)]  
I refer to this statement of the TARDIS machine because it touches on the notion of surrender in a process or procedure. The importance of surrender to the situation or site is in an attempt to understand it, -unburdened with pre-empted decision-making leading to a reduction of thought and opportunity.





*On Long Call*, 2009, 1950mm by 840mm



Modified extract from a coauthored paper and lecture by Jon Tarry (JT) and Riet Eeckhout (RE) at the 'Drawing Out' conference in Melbourne, 2010. The conference lecture was preformed as a conversation between Jon and myself about drawings that are at the forefront of this annotated conversation.

'Drawing Out Collapse' refers to the investigation of generative methods of spatial construction -building up-, and their collapse -breaking down.

The collaborative project between JT and RE began with an exchange of direct questions, which are explored through this paper. Resisting apparently divergent positions, what actually happens in the process of 'making and drawing' is a combination of viewpoints, one viewpoint is not exclusive from the other. Architecture responds to conditions of site, as a context exists before anything, sculpture creates a context within its own terms of idea generation.

**JT:** Can you talk about the generative processes of context in your spatial practice and the role of drawing?

**RE:** The design processes are hinging on Drawing Processes (the act) and The Process Drawing (as a result). Process Drawing (the act) deals with the act of drawing, the making of drawings, the performance of the drawing and its relationship to design intent -the process being drawn. More specifically, the role of drawings as a non-representational tool in the design process lays at the core of this investigation. Drawings are used as a tool for the generation of new or better understanding of the specificity of site, subject and program of a project. Drawing is used as a tool for thinking and discovery.

*Process Drawing* instigates a reflection that comes from an ideal conception as opposed to a pragmatic idea. This occurs in such a way that during the design discourse a task or brief is replaced by a series of self-inflicted design instructions moving the mind further and further away from 'the familiar'.

An investigation of *Process Drawing* defines space through the notion of boundaries; space as geometry; space as measurement; as depth; as a field accommodating tension and force. *Process Drawing* is developed as a research and design tool within transdisciplinary collaboration that nurtures the ability to be critical.

For a brief moment, the ideal exists only in the drawing, the model, or any other artifact produced. It is free from concept, free from pragmatic application yet aims towards the discovery of a new result or new application.

*Process Drawing* negotiates a relationship between concept and form as a principle that dislocates form from its conventionally assumed association to function, meaning and aesthetics, without denying the presence of these conditions. As part of the design discourse, *Process Drawing* seeks connection between spatial components: linearity and conditions of what happens in-between elements. More specifically, this research deals with the performative space between the scale of the interior and its urbanity; between the furniture and the architecture; between a function and its context.

That performative space is explored through hand drawing. Drawing is an action in the here and now. When a line is drawn, a second line can only be drawn in relation to the first line and its context. New lines renegotiate and reposition a design intent and together they perform and structure a template for a potentially built and unbuilt environment that exists as an object of the mind or the hand.

As my thinking is built up from compositions of lines reforming a context, you, Jon, articulate spatial installations with surfaces establishing a context. Therefore, context is created by the work. The work operates as a formal investigation between dimensions, flat paper (planar) and moves into three dimensions. It creates implied volumes that open, enclose or displace. Gille Deleuze refers to a 'Nomadic', experience of contemporary life as one of infinite layers of existence, layers that fold over and again. An example of the work is 'long Call'. This project conceptualizes the visual cones projected onto an existing landscape.

#### Case Study One: 'On Long Call' about 'Long Call'

The drawing process between artist and architect started off with an image of a sculpture aptly titled, 'Long Call' that was photographed on a white table against a white wall. The photographic framing restricts information, scale and context. In this way the objects context is a relationship of planes, openings and enclosures. This is what Donald Judd describes an 'absolute object': an object in relation to itself; a non-referential form.

**RE:** I am trying to find the context of Long Call. Even with some background information from Jon, the object's form is completely unclear to me. So I started to draw on the information available. Object Trajectories.

Trajectories leading to nowhere specific at the moment.

In my drawing practice I introduced the word Contexture, (Context and Texture). The word Contexture interrogates the intricate relationship between context and its interiorised graphical understanding as annotated texture. Texture is defined as the visual and tactile quality of a surface. Contexture explores the texture of a context; the visual and tactile quality of a context.

In my architecture practice, *Contexture* explores the layered identities of an urban or rural fabric with its implicit history. Transformations on a site happen through processes of exchange and consolidation, through additions and demolitions. Annotated texture refers to the exploration of site-intelligence with an agenda, a program and a client. In this case there is no client. The site is a perspective with no physical context. There is the perspective and there is Jon.

This gives rise to Object trajectory drawings, which are an attempt to find context with limited information. The drawing process began with the distortion of distance and subjective assumptions. This analytical exploration revealed a spatial order and an enigmatic undercroft supporting the upper side of the sculpture. The conversation developed around the undercroft, of the forms, axis and trajectories. The interior remains an unknown space. The concept of TARDIS became relevant as an infinitely larger interior space than its exterior. The drawing went in search for this unidentified interior space.

## Procuring Context

### Process Drawing

Drawings collapse the moment a mark is made on a surface, the dimension changes and shifts with each movement. The act of drawing is in itself one that comes about through resistance. Marking materials, pencil or pens leave a trace through amplification and pressure applied. Conceptually the drawing ends before it's beginning, and the reverse may be true. Drawings begin in thought, and come about through action and interpretation. This media 'fold back' is what creates the dialectic, yet it also undoes it efficiently. In between are spaces that may be unseen, yet it is this invisible space that drawing inverts to mediate what is seen in the world through observation, action, idea, interrogation and conveyance? When drawing collapses it is creating this new space of possibility. So how does one work in this collapsing space? How does one work within this unknowable space? We are well tuned to the heuristic picking apart once the crash has taken place and all is still. In relation to drawing there is a realm of free-fall, of going with the undoing, amplifying the entry into the unknown, as Kierkegaard tells, to fall like the spider making a web into the vast space of the unknown. The challenge is to stay in time with it and be in that space, to accept the collapse may not be a disaster but one that enables new realms for creative thought and action.

Facets are fractures, pure forms smashed into becoming another. This is a moment of rupture. Torn apart, becoming something else which folds back onto itself, into its prior state in a new way. The idea that once existed is made new, a renewal of its intended purpose yet altered in way that contains and reveals the flaws in thinking. This is often erased in production and mediation for reasons unknown. I'm speaking in general terms yet I'm thinking of demolition where the value all that went into its making and purpose is abandoned for whatever rationale. These ruins may take the sentiment of the original design. The case studies houses may be examples of this I'm not sure.

RE: At your presentation during the GRC (Graduate Research Conference, RMIT) in Melbourne you showed video fragments of a building being demolished and subsequently you showed the Infold sculptures and inversion. Is there a relationship between the two? Is there a form finding aspect in witnessing and registering demolition that serves the infolds or inversion? The moment of rupture you write about, is it the act of breaking in a factual sense and/or the breach of the harmonious on a conceptual level?

Scarpa and Pugh, retention and intention

Retention:

- the power to retain capacity for retaining
- the act or power of remembering things; memory (dictionary.com)

Intention:

An act or instance of determining mentally upon some action or result) (dictionary.com)

**RE:** Do you relate to either of following two different processes; classical sculpture and the design towards a finished object ones sees in its mind's eye, or on the other hand a process of discovery avoiding the singular image at the end of the design discourse and aiming for something new and unexpected?

**JT:** Two questions in one. Difficult to answer. I'm always looking for the second question, something new and unexpected. Though this is somewhat of an echo that returns but with reverb. I'll get to this one in more depth later.

RE: Do the Infolds exist in drawing as well?

### Relational

**RE:** The volumes negotiate a specific contextual relationship with their environment -as if they are in fact responding to something, but still in the middle of their answers. And therefore lose their properties as self-conscious sculptures. However they seem to set up a dialogue between themselves (wireframe and solid) -like figures in a composition or could this be an attempt to reveal something about the design process; in relation to the first question: 'Do you consider your Infolds as sculptures or as installations?'

### Enormity

**RE:** There is gravity to the work -not the kind of gravity-defying lightweight folds portraying dematerialized surfaces. They are heavy, bodily and crafted. In fact they do not appear to be surfaces, they are volumes, cocoons that hold their intrinsic properties but haven't fully outgrown their purpose. Frozen in the moment of trying to find form, from which the intelligence is not known to the viewer. Each Infold is a displayed creature, a frozen moment of its evolutionary change. – Like archeological finds. I am in that sense (as an audience) acknowledging design process from one individual piece to the other.

**RE:** Frame works of the sculptures displayed next to the volumes seem to attempt to analyze their inherent structure understandable by a categorical human mind. Confirming we cannot grasp the riddle of its DNA through rationalizing or objectifying it.

Can you talk about the relationship between frame and solid?

**JT:** I realize its time to do new work. I bought a wooden camera and have been taking photos with pinhole low technology of Boom Ruins, empty buildings that result form an economy in distortion. First one is the entertainment centre, next a garage, then a car yard and a house. I'm going to look at Gordon Matta Clark again and see how he dealt with these structures by boring holes and slicing through them. I've decided to go analogue: light photos and drawings and models.





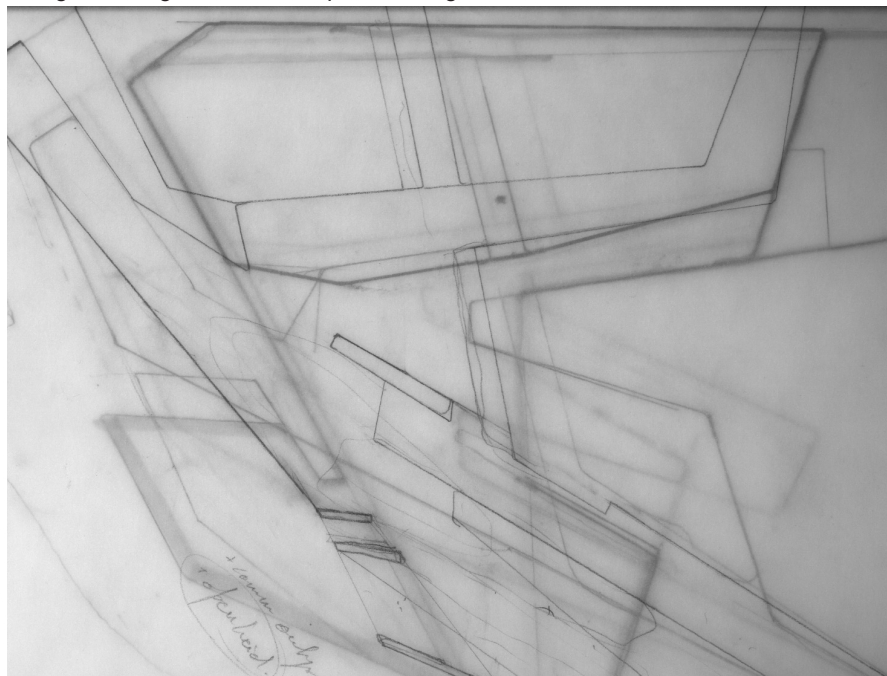
Jon Tarry

## Collaborative exchange; Dialogical Practice

The collaboration with Jon started with a brief conversation at the 2009 RMIT Research Conference in Melbourne and a long trail of e-mail communications began between two work stations -one in London and one in Perth.

The study shares a concern with spatial configurations however the applications of the outcomes differ. Jon is an artist exploring sculptural construction and I am an architect exploring the architecture of the built and unbuilt environment. Both artist and architect have an affinity with the drawing process and how it can construct a discourse, forming a common ground of visual communication.

Design drawing for Dock One port building, 2008









### ***Drawing Out Collapse***

Drawing Out Collapse' is a drawing project in which I used film as base material to draw from. The site is a sequence from the film 'Prix d'Amour' by Jon Tarry and the project began by me asking Jon if I could draw this film.

'Prix d'Amour' documents the demolition of a residential villa in Perth. The back story to the house is a failed love story and a status symbol in decline. The villa is dressed with interpretations of classical architectural features such as the portal with an architrave and columns that articulates the house entrance.

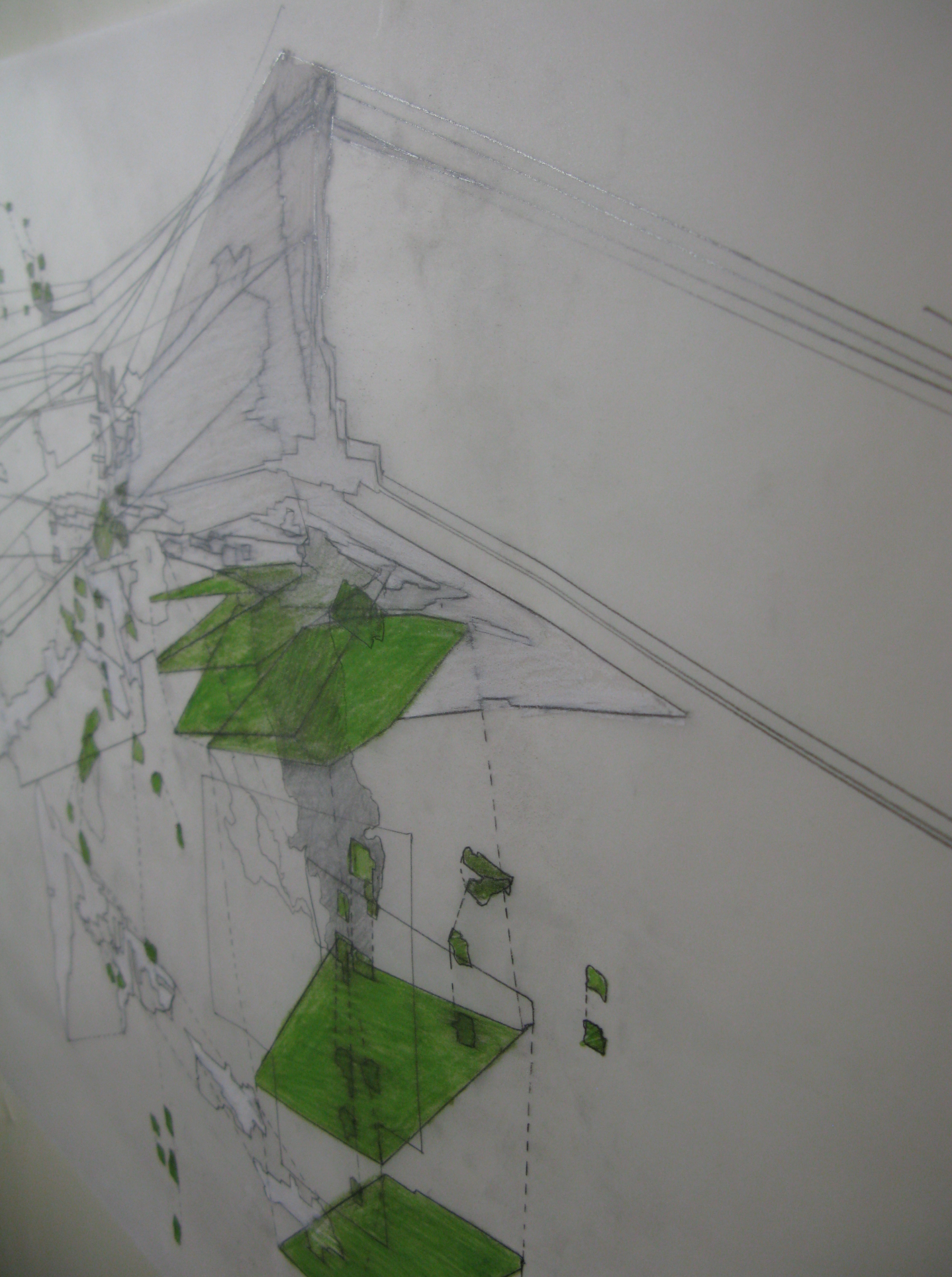
I had asked Jon if I could draw on his film without a actual plan in mind of what it might mean 'to draw on a film'.

I rarely start with an exact plan in mind. I keep it vague for myself and postpone decision making until I am drawing. I let the variables float in my mind for a while, sometimes months, and I take decisions as I put pencil to paper.

I projected the film onto my drawing board.







*Detail of study for 'Drawing Out Collapse', 2010*



Modified extract from a co-authored paper and a lecture by Jon Tarry and myself at the 'Drawing Out' conference in Melbourne, 2010

How may drawing examine this moment of collapse?

One way was to use line to trace falling fragments in a mode of stop animation. Here, a still of one frame of 18 per second is chosen. The analysis maps the path and shapes of falling debris, halts the sense of motion, time is stilled and locked into its opposite. This shifts the readable into a familiar narrative and descriptive mode with which the eye is familiar in the same way Eadweard Muybridge recorded galloping horses and walking people.

This still-motion captures and contains the subject for examination. The debris of a once ordered façade is incisively mapped, the void space is marked with white surfaces, while solid constructions are marked with closed line forms and the dotted lines indicate trajectories. The moment of collapse is investigated, the lines and surfaces create a systematised annotated drawing that goes beyond the representation.

The drawings for this work overlay analytical drawing and represent a retracing of the fall-in-time motion. Lines and surfaces collapse, are broken and reformed again as fragmentary order. A re-framing of space is observed and arrested. Once a drawing has started on the bases of agreed information, a process of entropy is irreversibly set in motion. The set up tends to progress in the direction of increasing entropy, in this case the continuous breaking down of order. In between the debris are spaces that may be unseen, yet is it this invisible space that drawing inverts to mediate what is seen in the world through observation, action, idea, interrogation and conveyance? When drawing collapses it is creating this new space of (observation) possibility.

So how does one work in this collapsing space? How does one work within this unknowable space? We are well attuned to the heuristic picking apart once the crash has taken place and all is still.

Or does the moment of collapse in a system refers to the moment where everything fundamentally falls apart to reveal the start of a new discovery? A collapsed space is released from its intended structural order and constraint and the physical composition gives in to gravity in a 'drawn down' force. In a moment a void is filled with the unravelling that destruction allows.

In the case study of the demolition of a Perth home, Prix d'Amour, the fabric of the building that once made a volume is now altered. Engineered to stand up and fulfil its illusionary function, the stage is smashed and broken, its material integrity released and a new spectacle of undoing comes into play.

In the act of drawing the tension and forces accommodated by the artist (through filming it) and architect (by drawing it) activates the paper-space. This process of drawing follows a path of least resistance, marks left behind by this force trace a moment in action. The process drawing is the remnant of thinking action and has relevance to the next act of drawing.

With the drawing process being allowed to perform between tacit understanding of the *site* and analysis, conceptual connections are traced on site negotiating unprogrammed and programmed lines, voids and solids.

So how does one work in this collapsing space?

Drawing requires an act of surrender, where line and marks are lifelines of ideas and reference points for navigation towards an unknown space. As Kierkegaard tells us; it is to fall like the spider making a web into the vast space of the unknown. The challenge is to remain conscious of velocity, to accept that this collapse, while involving surrender, is not giving up, but giving over to realms of creative thought and action.

How do we Process Form: with reference to Andre Breton and the process of 'Ecriture Automatique'? The automatic drawing operates as a tool to self-read design intentions. The drawing has to be drawn to challenge the relevance of thoughts. The white canvas does not exist; the mind exists within the drawing, even before the drawing is materialised. The process of tracing lines on paper is a process of appearance and creation simultaneously. Intuitive conceptual hand drawings explore a given context graphically for the creation of another; a process of interiorizing, making it your own and understanding through the hand.

The autonomous drawing exists to find implicit qualities such as rhythm and tension of a site, and start a process of redirecting this tension.

The drawing process encapsulates the implicit act of design.

These case studies ('On Long Call' and 'Drawing Out Collapse') explore drawing as a generative tool that is at the foreground of enquiry where methods and practice fuse and constantly evolve. Here the drawing process is a non-linear path to reveal concept; drawing may be an interruption, convoluted and in surrender to the unforeseen.

The establishment of a working platform where a common ground and dialogue facilitates an exchange of ideas and thinking ultimately surrenders to the unknown. Ideas are speculation in the act of being given form.

Where these drawings and partial texts will lead are equally a subject for speculation, yet it is at the basis of critical generative practice for art and architecture.

I run through the film footage front to back, back to front. I start skipping fragments and reviewing others. I start to slow down at certain parts and go forward frame by frame. And backwards frame by frame.

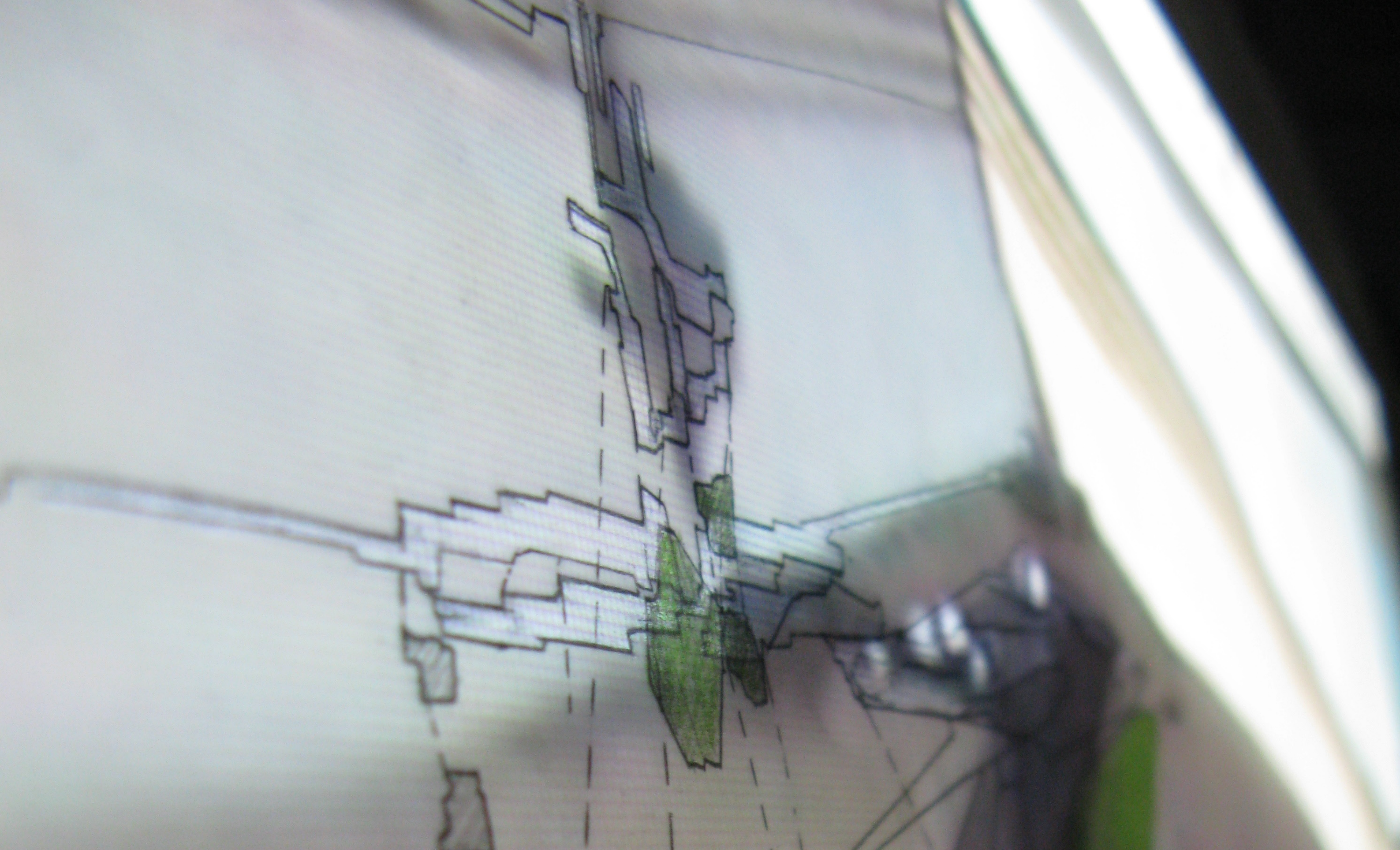


*Project site 'Drawing Out Collapse'; 8 second Film sequence from the flim 'Prix d'Amour', Jon Tarry*





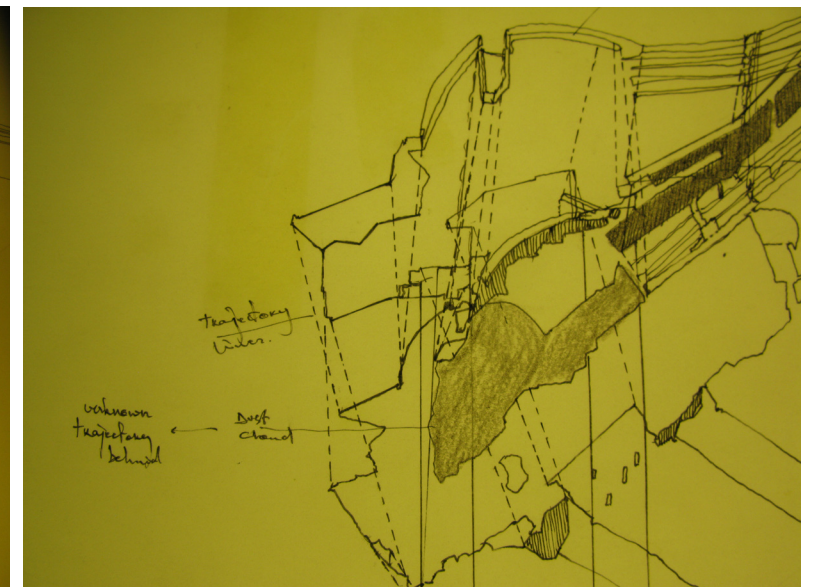
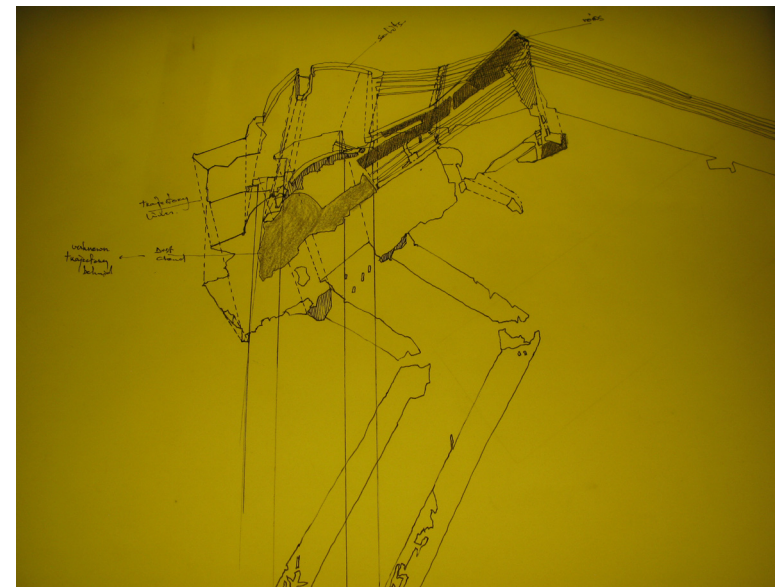






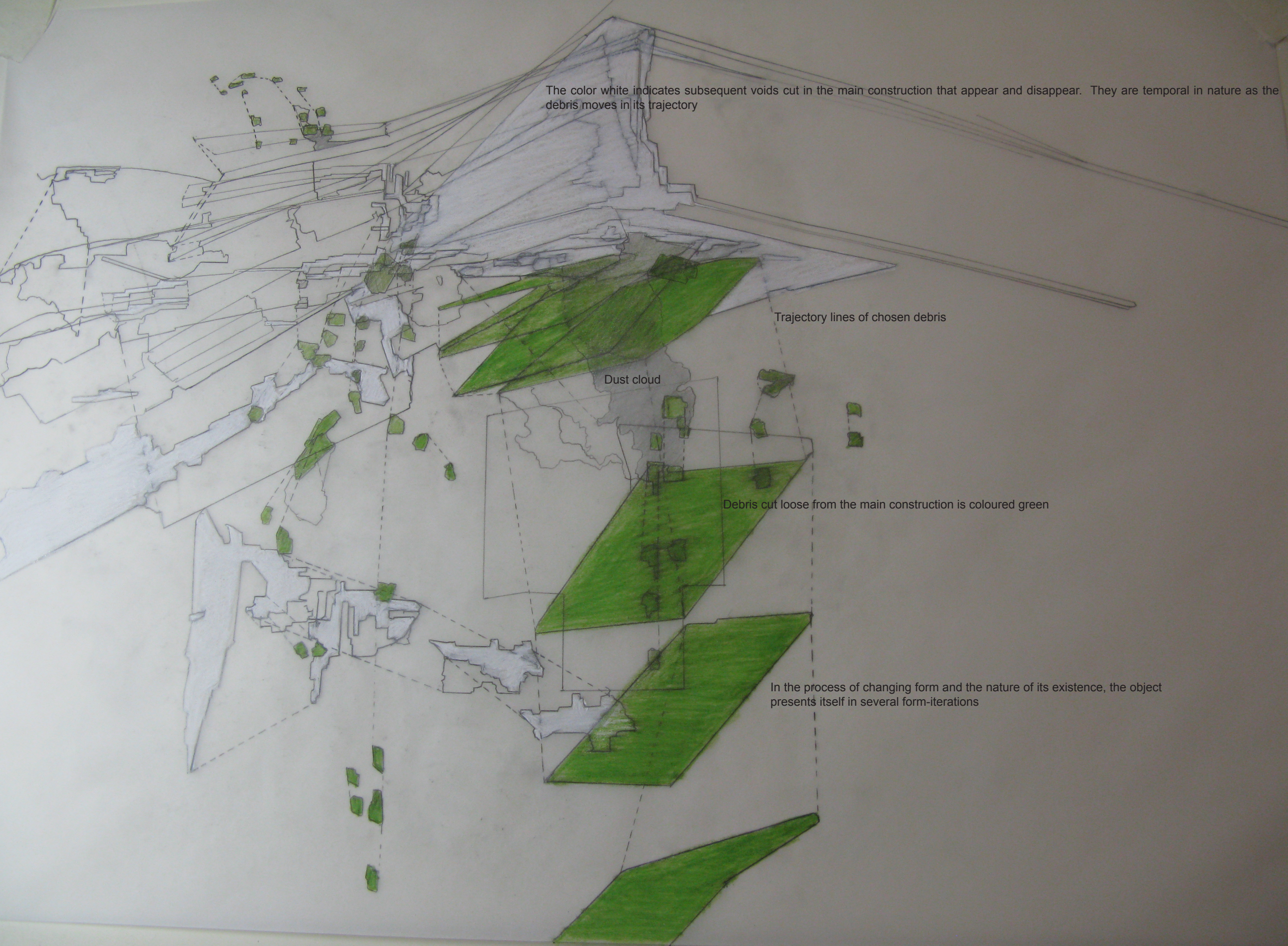


I decide to follow objects into free fall towards unrecognizable waste material and discover interesting choreographies of objects changing form as they move out of place and go into free fall.



*Drawings investigating the elements essential to the situation. These are drawings guiding a selection process of what to involve in this particular project, and how these elements perform together in the specific situation. The performance between selected elements on the drawing will outline the expression of the drawing and how I will develop the process further.*





The color white indicates subsequent voids cut in the main construction that appear and disappear. They are temporal in nature as the debris moves in its trajectory

Trajectory lines of chosen debris

Dust cloud

Debris cut loose from the main construction is coloured green

In the process of changing form and the nature of its existence, the object presents itself in several form-iterations

## Explorative Drawings Investigate the Field for Useful Debris.

As I am drawing, the field drawing starts to gain notational information relevant to this project only. Colour and line type are assigned a meaning. I test which information I need to use and what to drop.

Where there was once material, in the next film frame it has changed form and moved to another place, and then it moved again. Every frame, the same object changes form.

What becomes important in the drawings is the pivotal moment an object cuts loose from the main structure. When the object gains independence and presents itself as a separate object, the object is coloured green.

Voids move around the site as well. One fraction of a second it is here; the next frame it has moved to somewhere else.

When following an object in free-fall not all positions or film frames are articulated in the drawing. From a chosen sequence there is a selection of frames, sometimes densely packed in a nervous movement, sometimes loosely spaced allowing an object to present itself in its form iterations.

I am getting quite excited here, I want to enlarge the projection to better see all these opulent form changes.





Following the trajectory of a void during demolition



Testing how to draw the outline of a moving construction element as it hinges from the building

Sequential voids are coloured white





When using film there is the point of view or 'standpoint' from which the film is made. It is the position from which the event is being looked at.

The position from which one is observing can be a fixed point of view looking at a moving event, or a moving point of view looking at a immobile situation. Then there are the interesting gradients in-between. It is mostly the gradients in between that make that point of view 'active' or 'present' in the observation.

In '*Drawing Out Collapse*' the importance of 'point of view' was not present yet. There is no fixed point of view as the footage is filmed with camera in hand, so the point of view moves slightly from frame to frame. However, I took the active role of the point of view away by drawing a reference object on the drawing and corrected the projector's position every frame, to take away the slippage and therefore the 'point of view presence'.

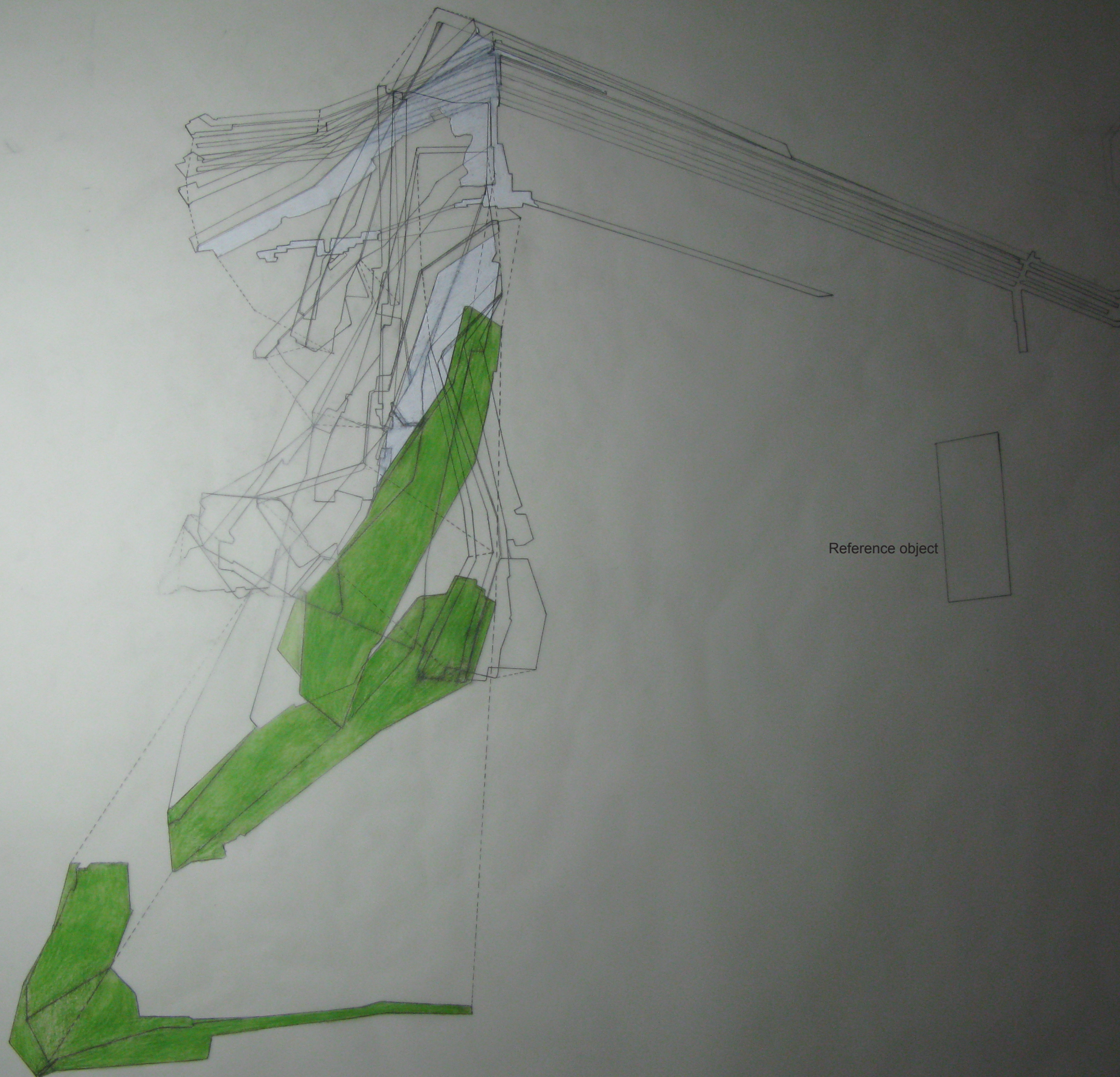


All elements drawn from the event have a specific place (front, back, middle). Yet in the perspectival space of the sequence of frozen moments, when these elements appear in the space of the drawing, the depth of the event is reduced and flattened.

All lines are drawn in the same line thickness. Objects are drawn as transparent outlines, allowing object outlines to overlap. Objects in the drawing space overlap and have a formal engagement. They appear at that particular place together, though at a different time and at a distance from one another in the depth of the perspectival space.

There is a collapse of time and space that allows the 'event' or situation to be reviewed in its entirety.

*'Drawing Out Collapse', 2010;  
1005mm by 840mm, Pencil on tracing paper*





At the demolition site, the architrave is reduced to something we do not value. Its elements are deformed to the point where it is not recognizable in the function as we knew it; we also seem to be unable to assign or associate meaning to it. We discard it and call it waste. The temporality of all we surround ourselves with only has a latent presence.

When the event is drawn, the lines belong to the drawing space and no longer to the event. The work stands on its own and has autonomy.

In search of other points of view, I regularly work on drawings turned on their side or up side down to de-familiarise myself from what I am looking at. I am searching for what is embedded within the form and not a mere association attached to that form.

**Green**

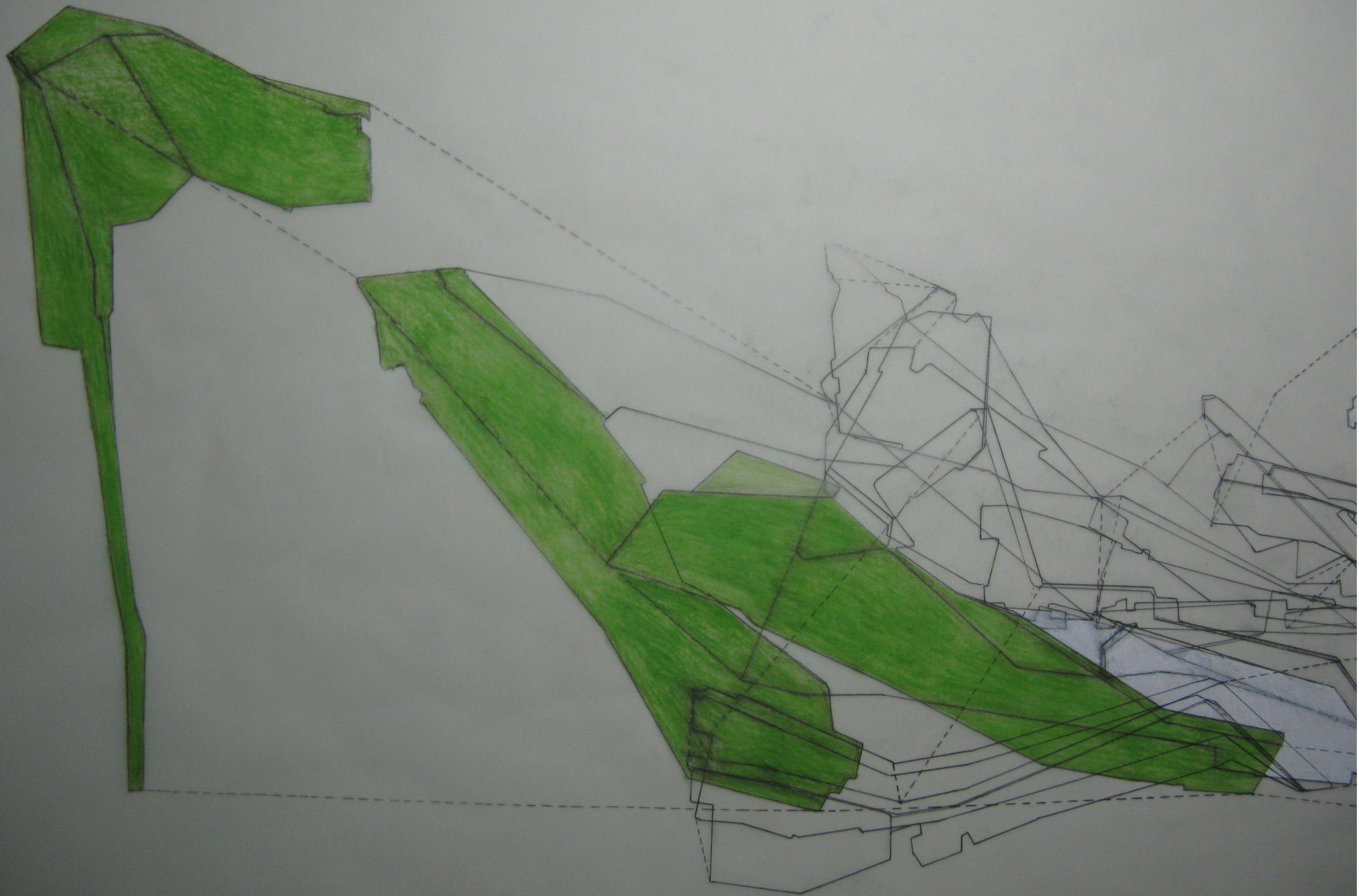
In the drawing space, the moment when the architrave is cut loose from its position above the entrance and from the rest of the construction, it establishes independence, it is freed from its role to perform in the hierarchy of this constructed status symbol. It is freed from its moulded form and we can arrest it in a position and look at how it presents its changing geometry with regained freedom.

There is an unknown identity embedded in this found object.

This autonomy intrigues me.

I am going to turn it around to see what it looks like from the other side.





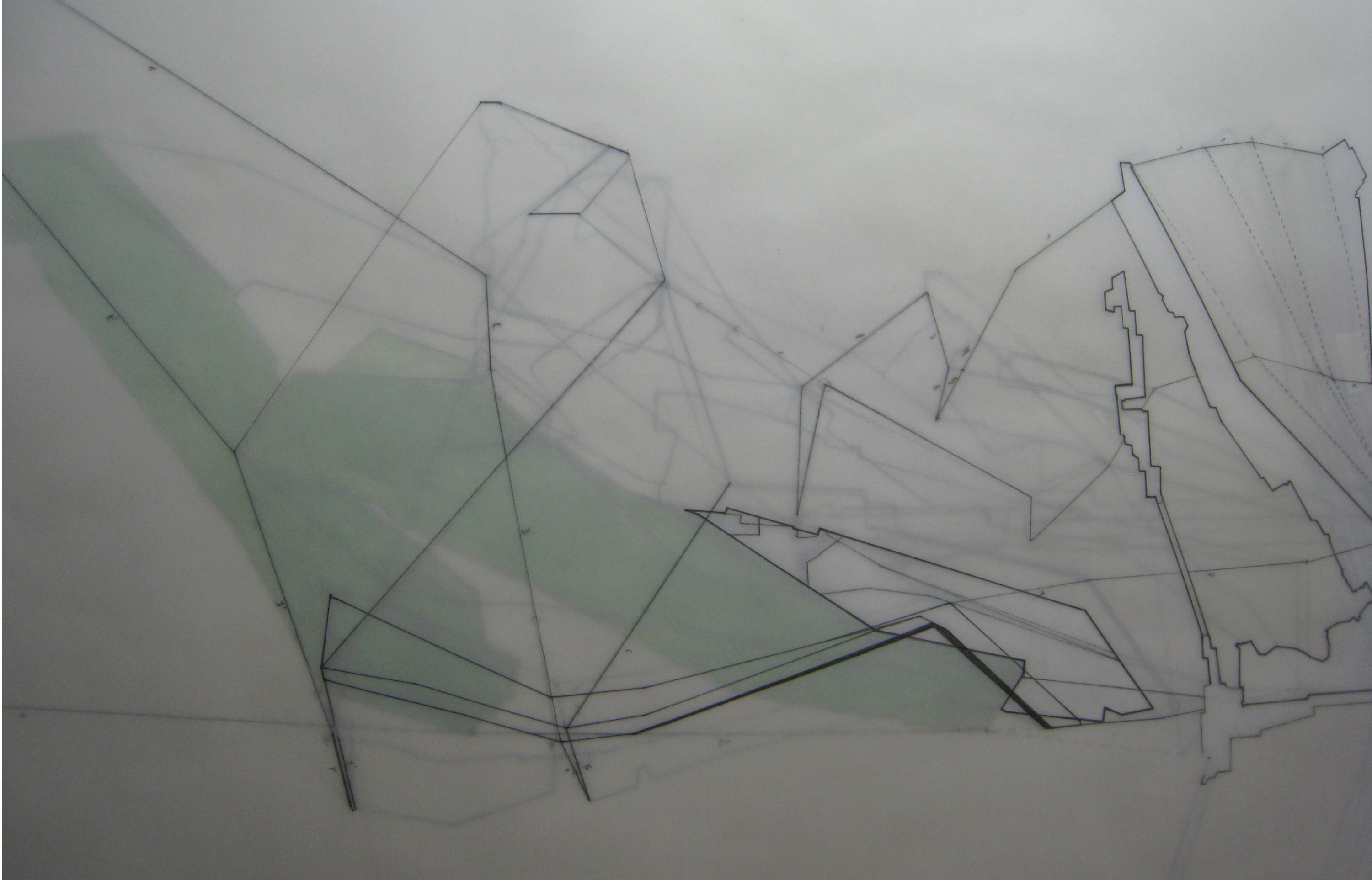
*I rotate the drawing to change the point of view*



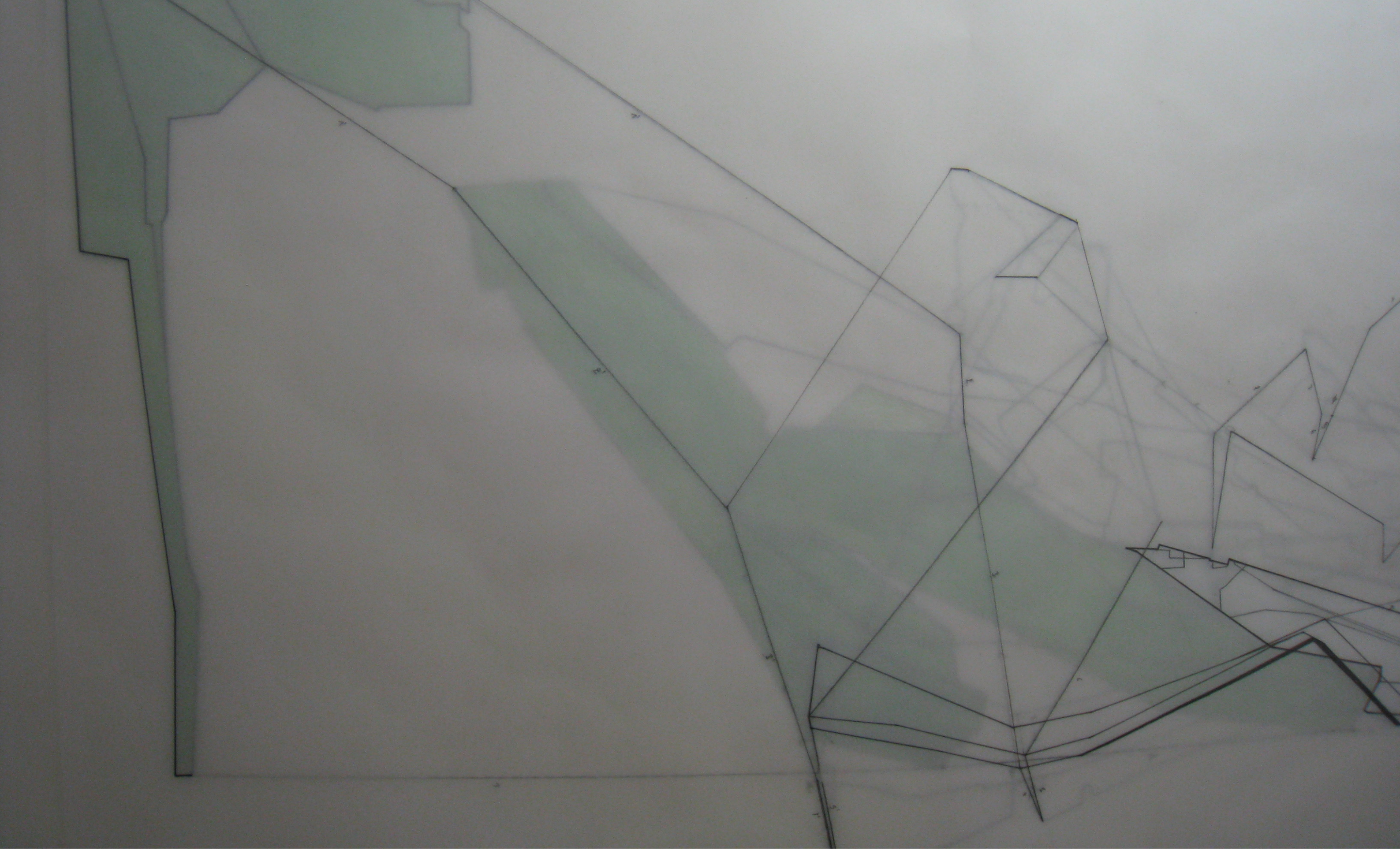
In search of the 'other' side of the object, the rotational trajectory of the object is drawn, encapsulating the object in its movement to the ground.

The objects, volumes, lines and surfaces in the field drawing perform in this speculative environment. Lines are re-interpreted and change thickness. In the overlay of tracing paper layered above tracing paper: some lines become part of the (back)ground, other lines are articulated as part of the figure.

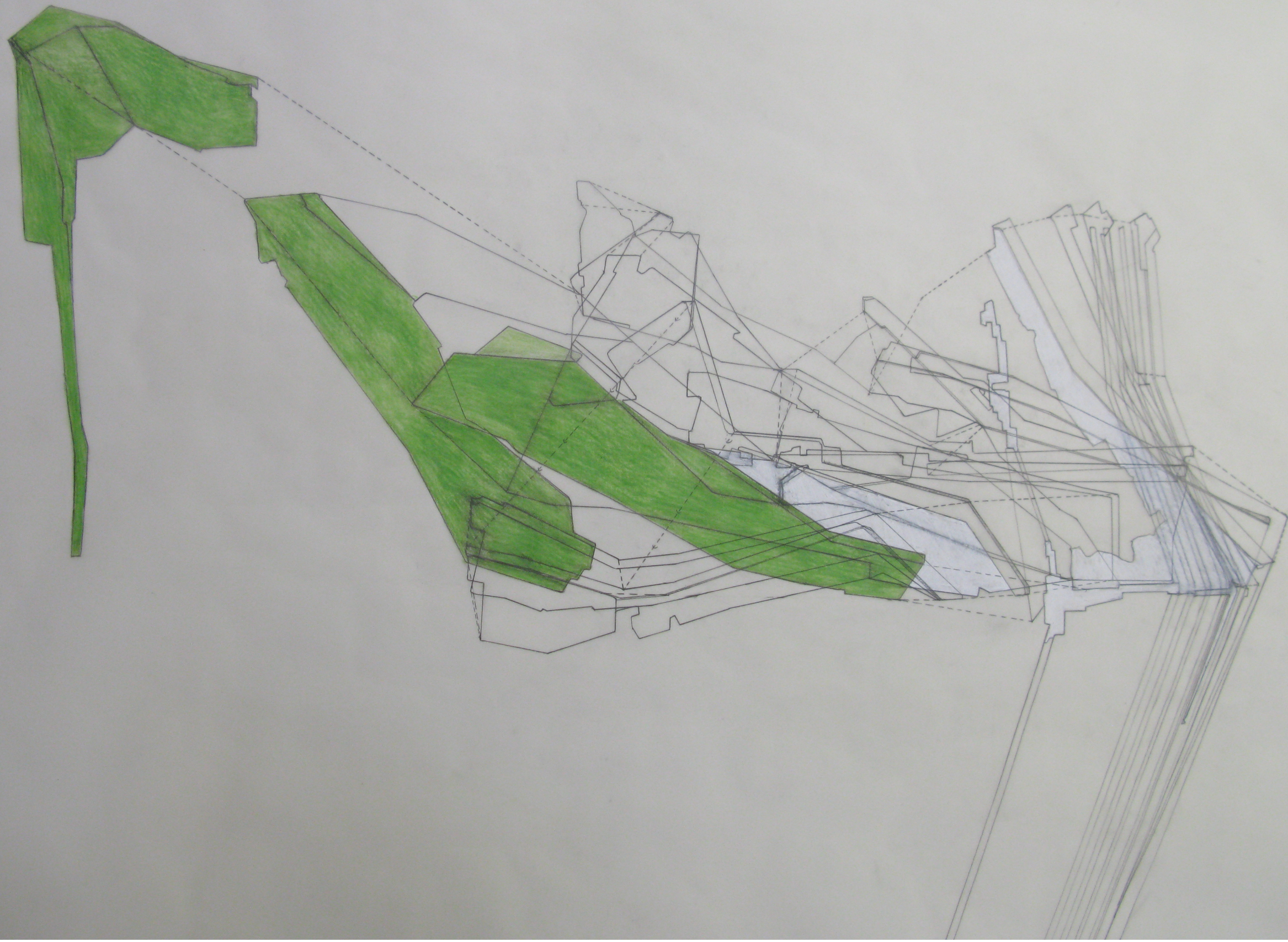




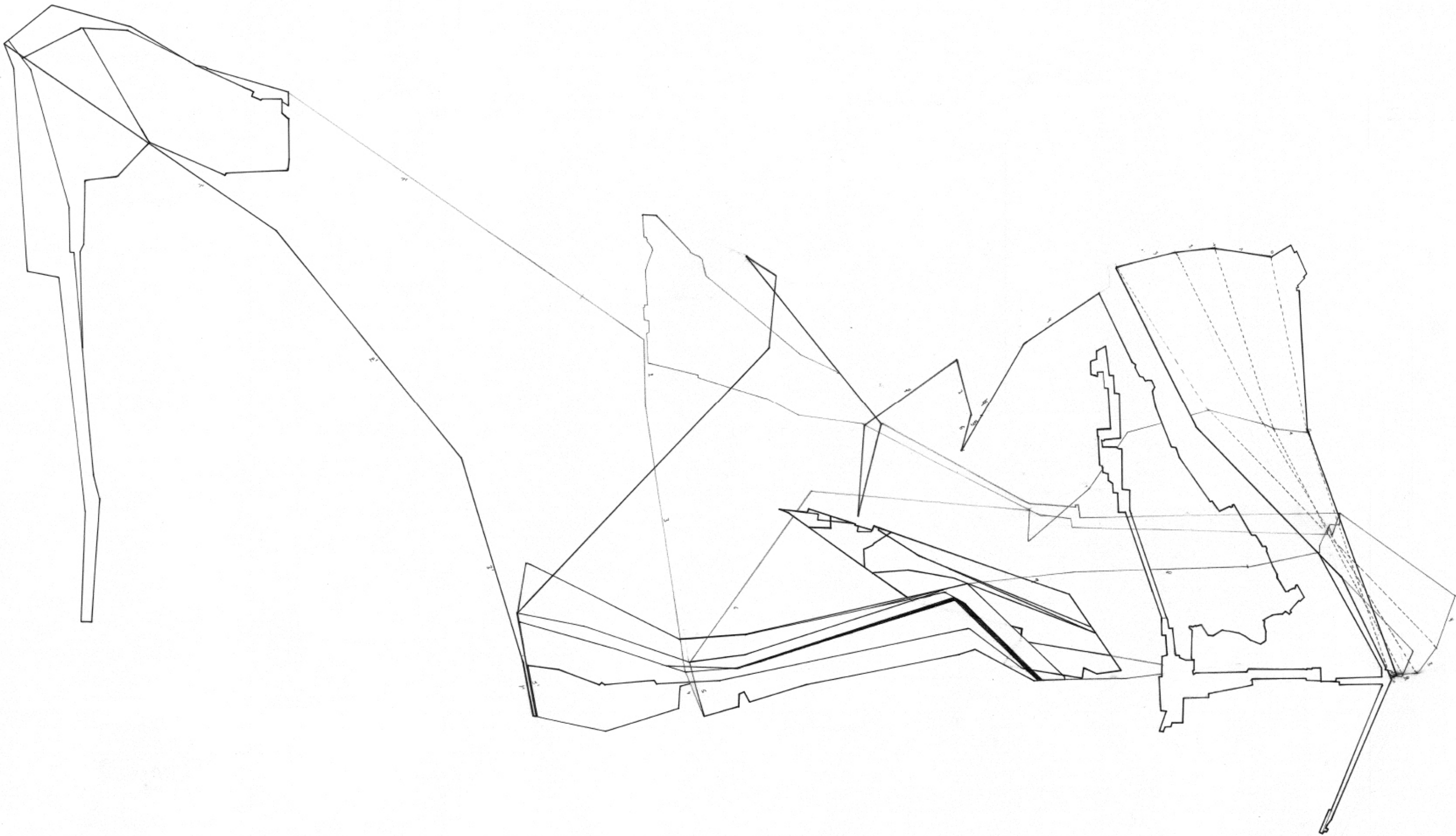










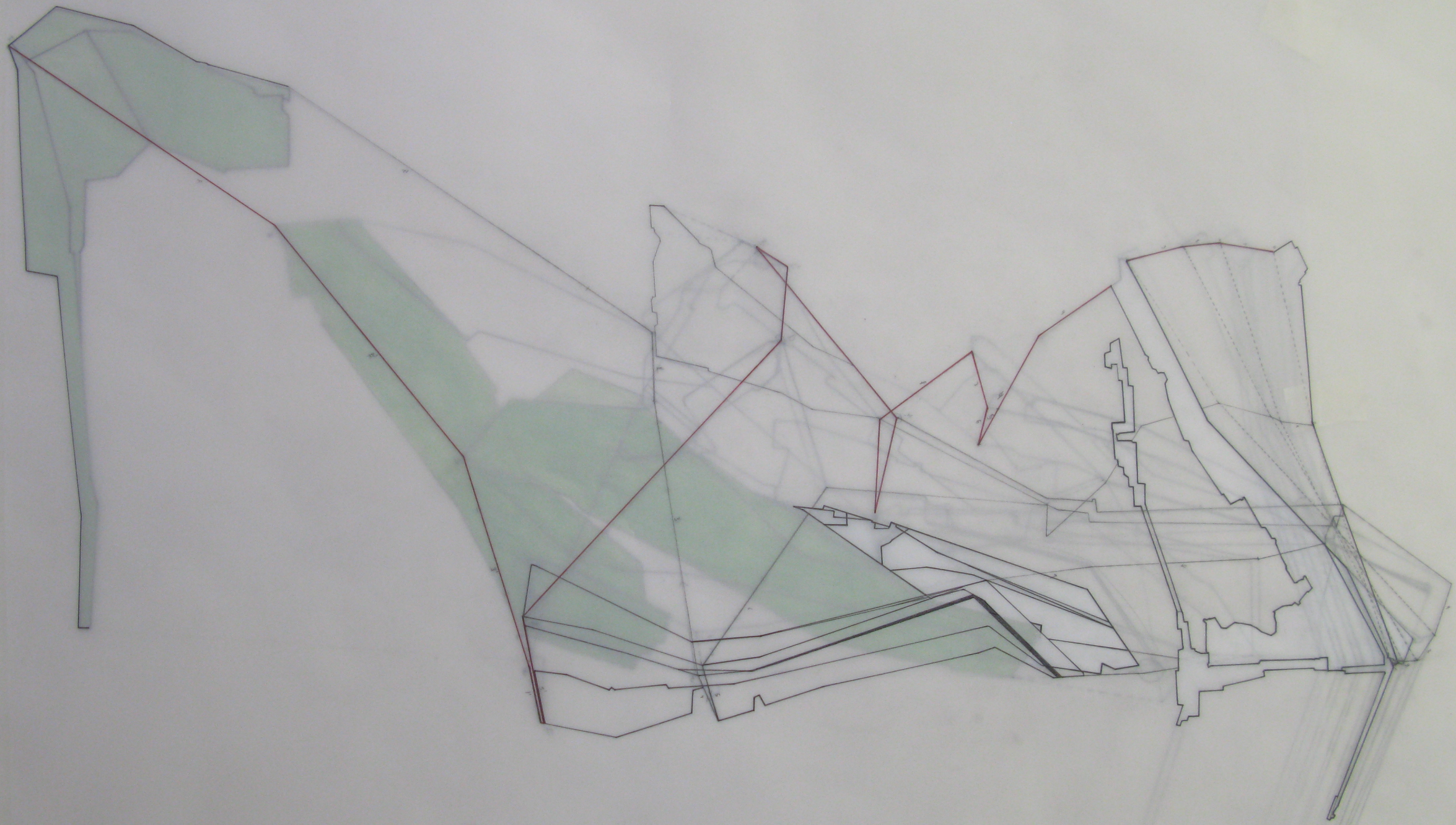




The cocoon encapsulating the movement of the object describes the trajectory and movements of the object and thus forms an integral part of the object's (de)formation.

External forces, weight, object properties and gravity that formed this object have now gone. It is only after the dust settles that the heuristic picking can take place. [01]

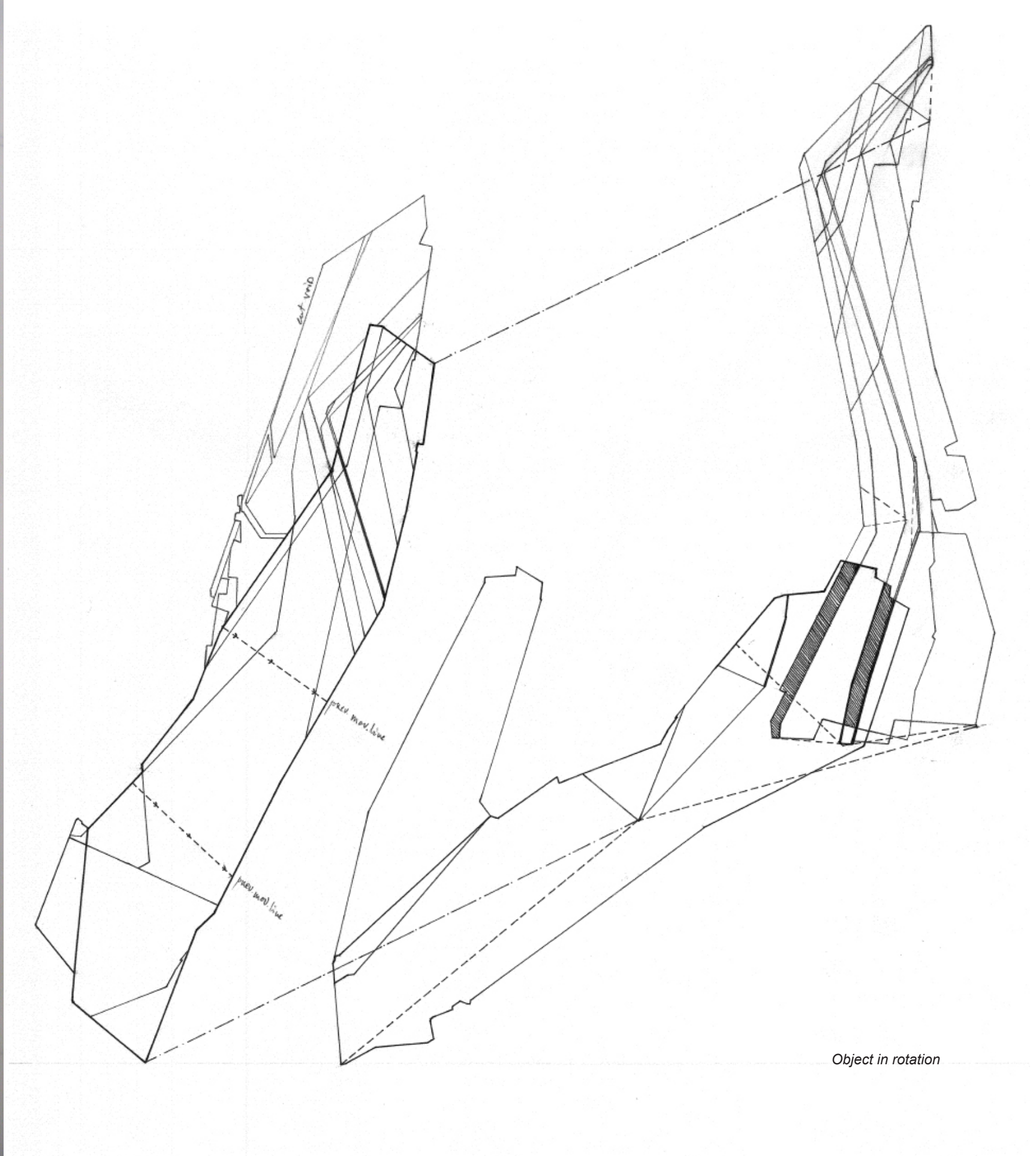
[01] J. Tarry and R. Eeckhout : Drawing Out Collapse, conference presentation 2010 Drawing Out Conference, Melbourne RMIT university/University of the Arts London







Object in focus



Object in rotation





*The search for field conditions and establishing a field drawing is developed as a device in order to find an entry in the situation -and to understand what speculative information it holds.*





*Entrance gate to Valletta*



## The Gate Drawings : Cycles of Redistributing of Solids and Voids

The project site of *The Gate Drawings* is the place of demolition and subsequent building of entrance gates to the city of Valletta, Malta, in a cycle that spans centuries. The Entrance Gate is a threshold structure connecting a bastion on either side that protects the city and a bridge crossing a ditch allowing people to enter the city from land side.

The Island of Malta mostly consists of Limestone, which the islanders mine and use as a building material. The voids that are cut out of mining pits become solid forms elsewhere on the island.

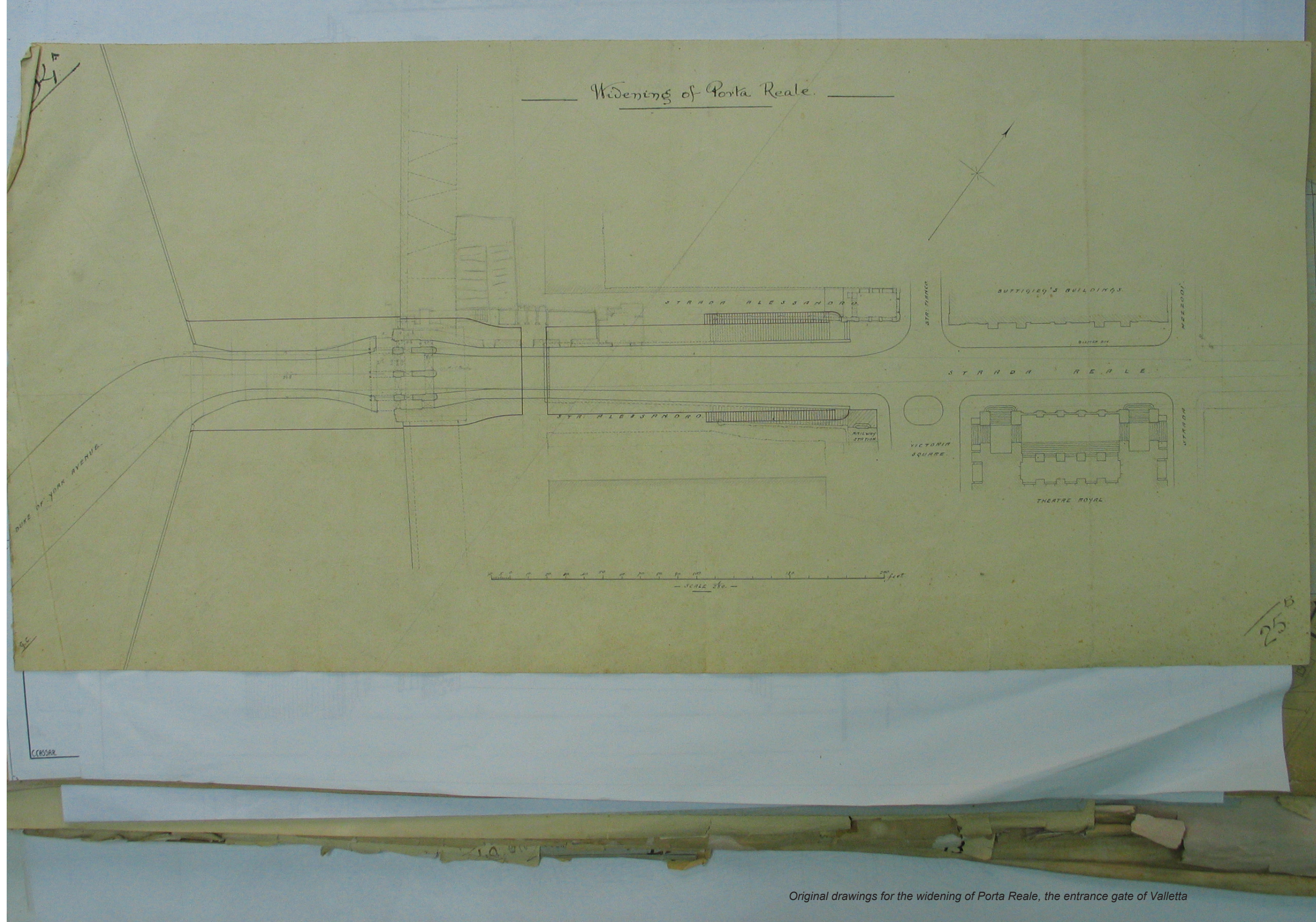
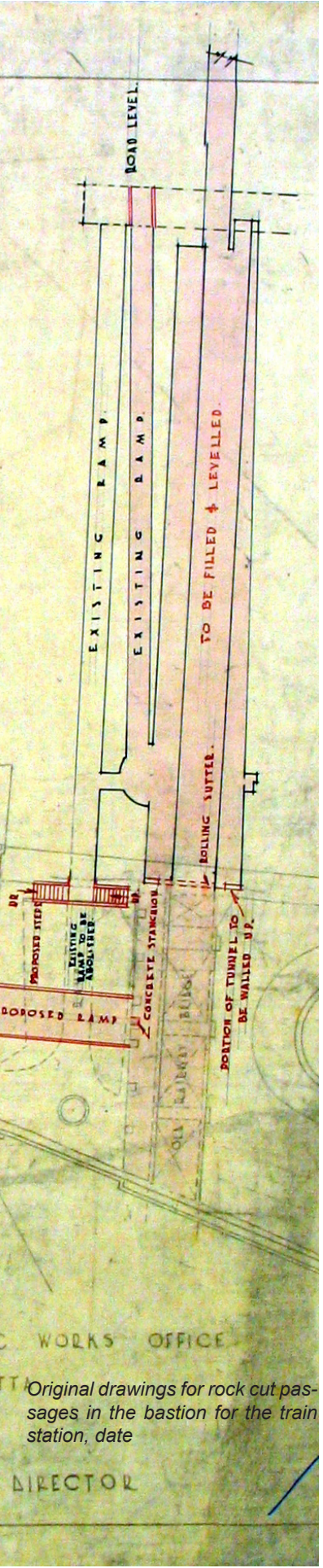
The ditch walls that form the bastion on either side of the entrance gate are characterized by solidity. The solid stone wall of the bastion relates to the void of ditch in a similar way as a church elevation relates to its square in front. The wall is partly carved out of the rock at the bottom of the limestone bastion, partly build up of mined limestone.



*I recorded the last demolition in May 2011 by film and photography: the demolition of the city gate build in 1960 makes space for Renzo Piano's new gate and parliament building.*

*The gate demolition project is a collaboration with Jon Tarry.*





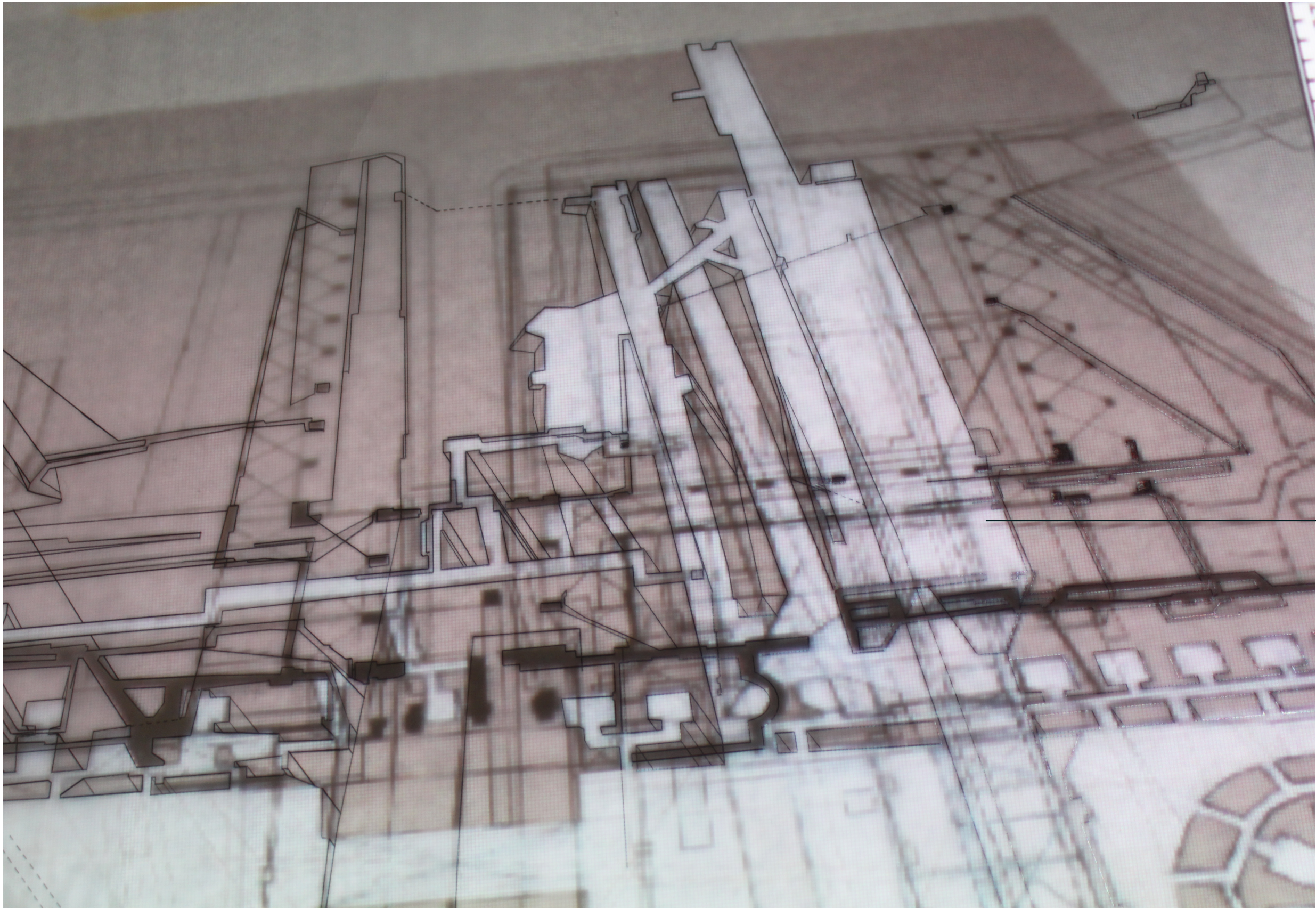
Original drawings for the widening of Porta Reale, the entrance gate of Valletta



Historical information is superimposed in this field drawing as I project them onto the drawing board and trace the scaled plans. The scaled drawing brings together notational plan drawings in a collapse of time (350 years) and space (plan depth of approximately 30 meters, the height of the bastion).

Original drawings of rock cut passages in the bastions and the train tracks in the main ditch for the train station





I consider this newly composed plan my site: the start of the field drawing.

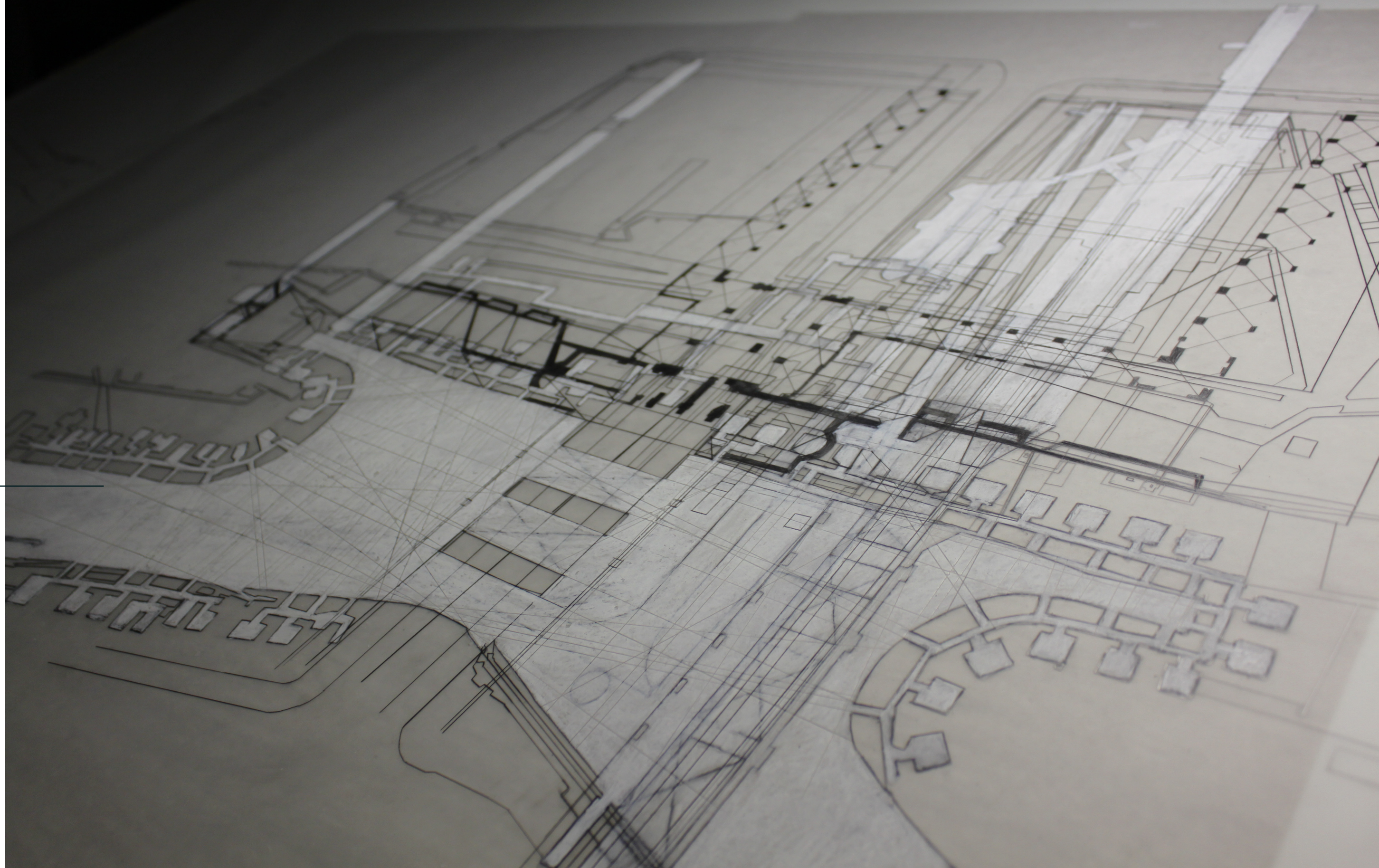
The function of the field drawing is to be confrontational and allow all actors to meet and intersect.

The field drawing brings together all available plan information of the subsequent gates and neighbouring bastions over time.

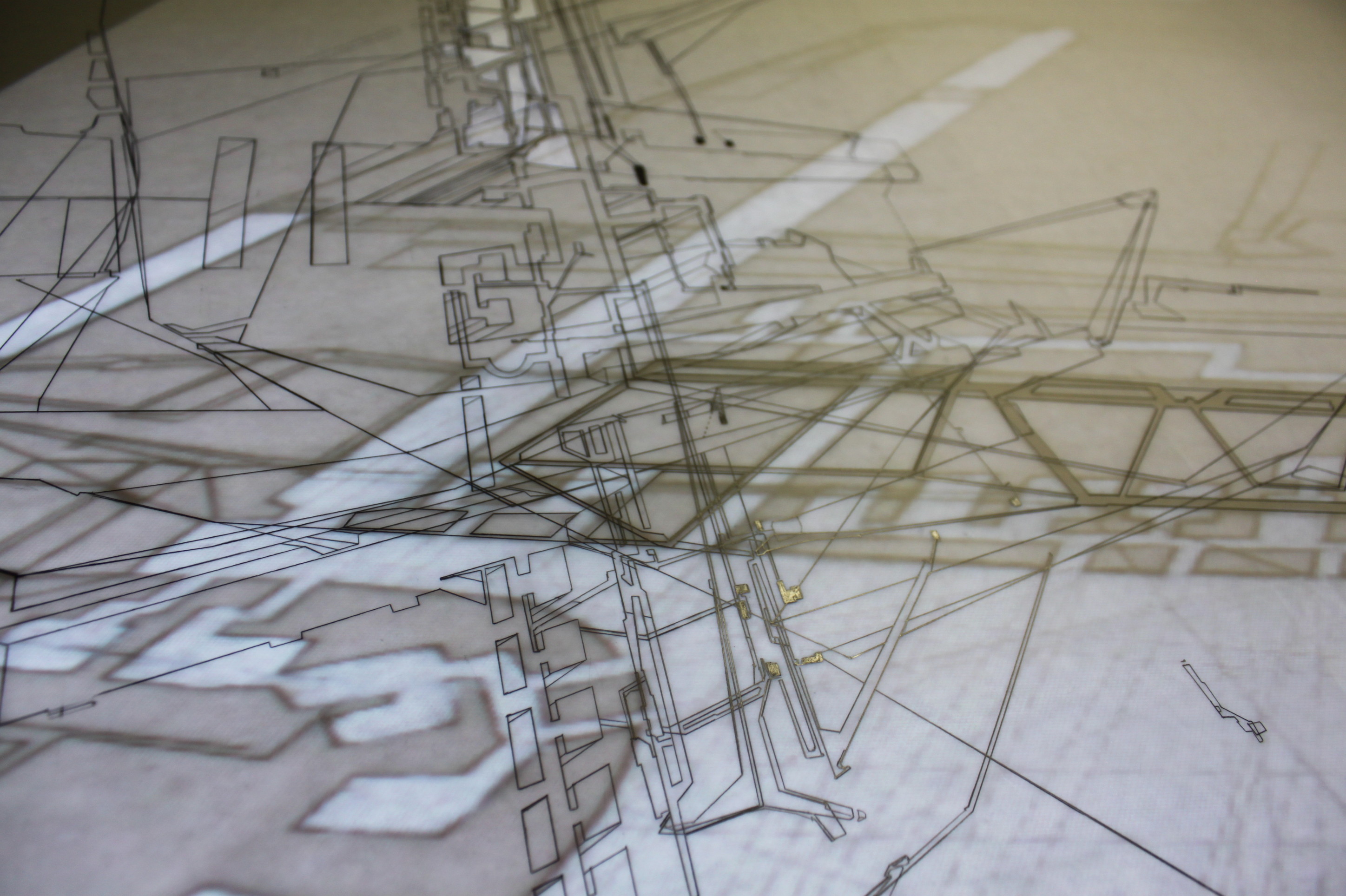
There is a field condition in this urban fabric that has slowly built up: it is entrenched with history, the bastions are carved by actions and reactions, by aspirations and demolitions, by repair, weathering and restoration.

The colour white annotates voids carved out of solid stone







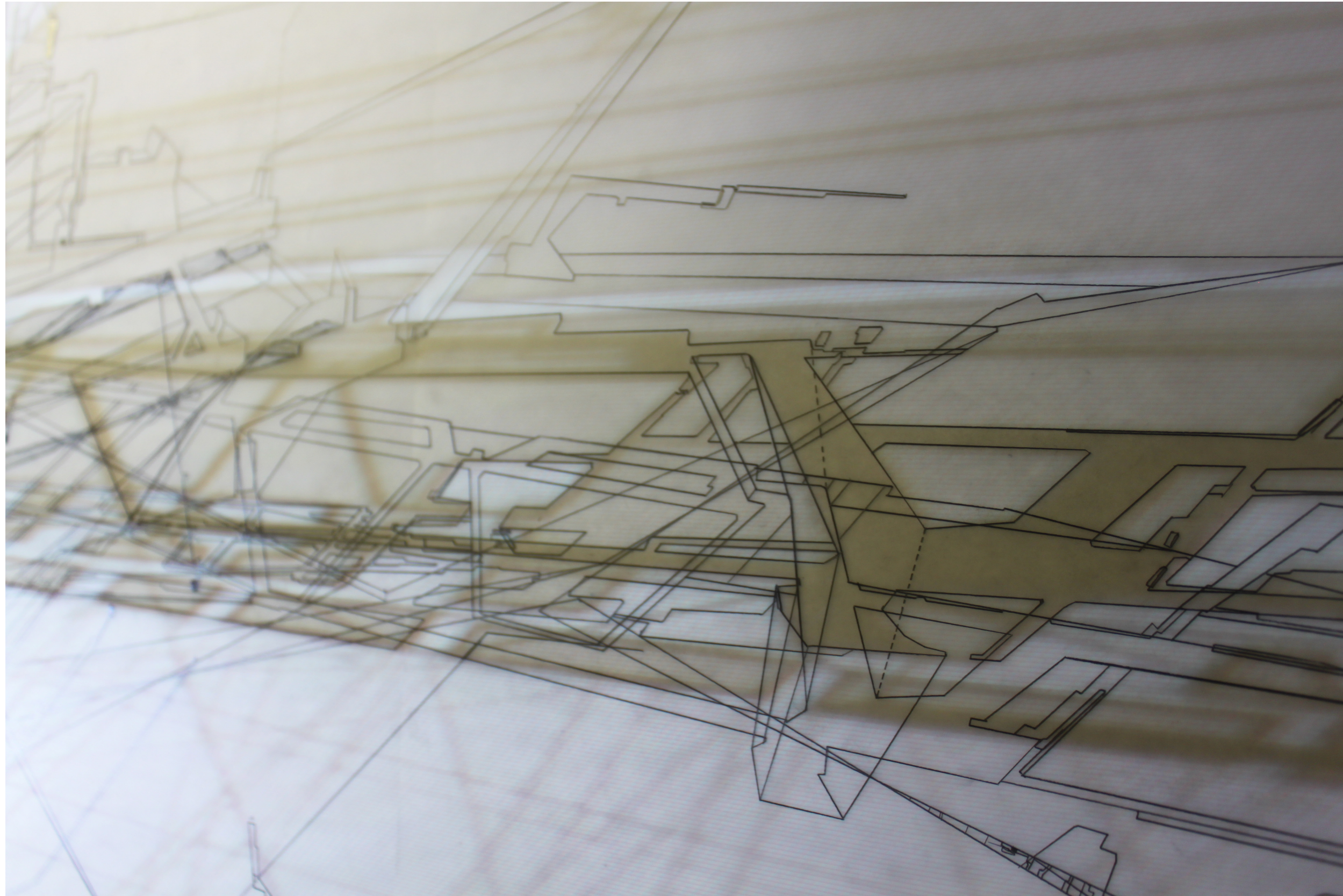




## Drawing Perceived Space as Opposed to Conceived Space

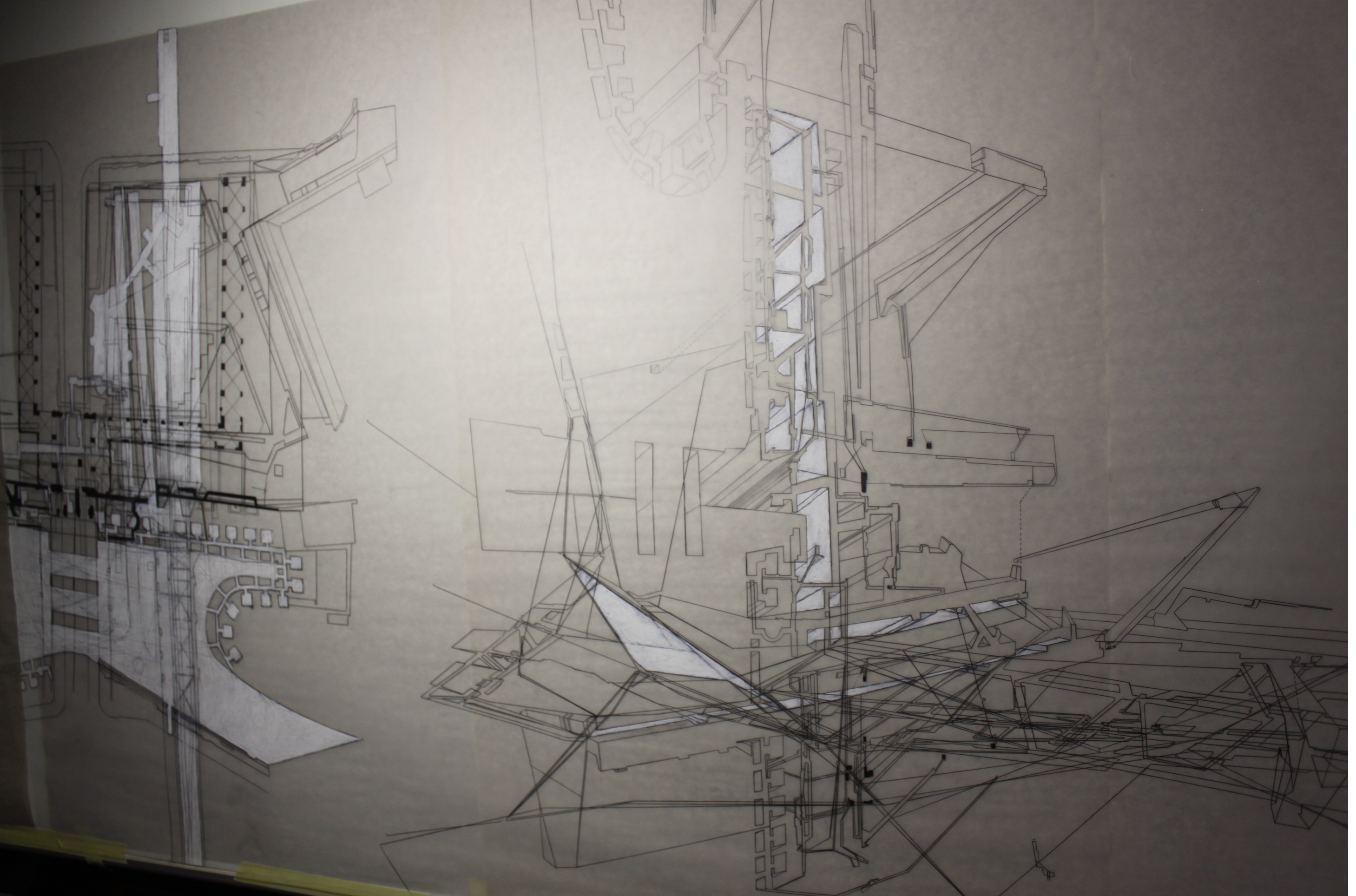
The consecutive drawings made from this compiled field drawing, are drawings whereby the 'conceiver/perceiver' (both maker and observer at once) takes a point of view on what has been compiled. The original field drawing with its collected information is photographed at an acute angle to the drawing surface, generating a perspective into the field drawing. In the consecutive drawings the field drawing is redrawn from a specific point of view, deforming the measured relationship between the elements in the field and thus changing its condition. While a plan drawing shows all elements presented equally in measurable proportion to each other (scaled), in the drawings that follow, the point of view deforms the proportion and disposition in the field. The field condition has changed to what I would like to refer to as 'perceived space'.

The same line information is redrawn but has consistent deformation from the specific point of view. [01]



[01] I use the word 'consistent' here in reference to the natural perspectival deformations as we look at something. Chosen aspects of the field drawing become foreground others become background.





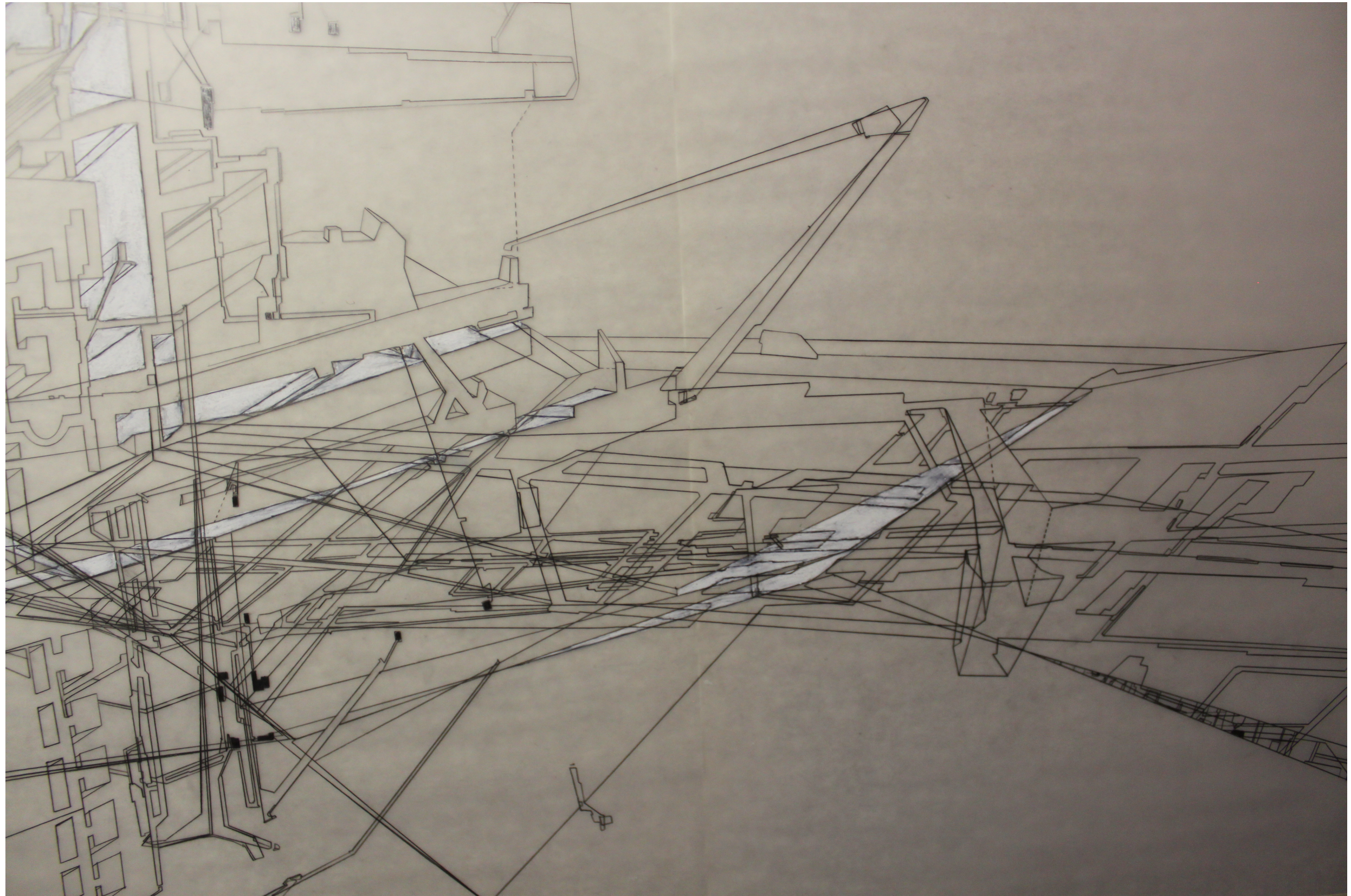


The field condition realigns and articulates identities of parts in the field. The drawings uncover a depth, resolution and relationship between the field conditions. These are expressed in lines, surfaces and volumes that support void and solidity.

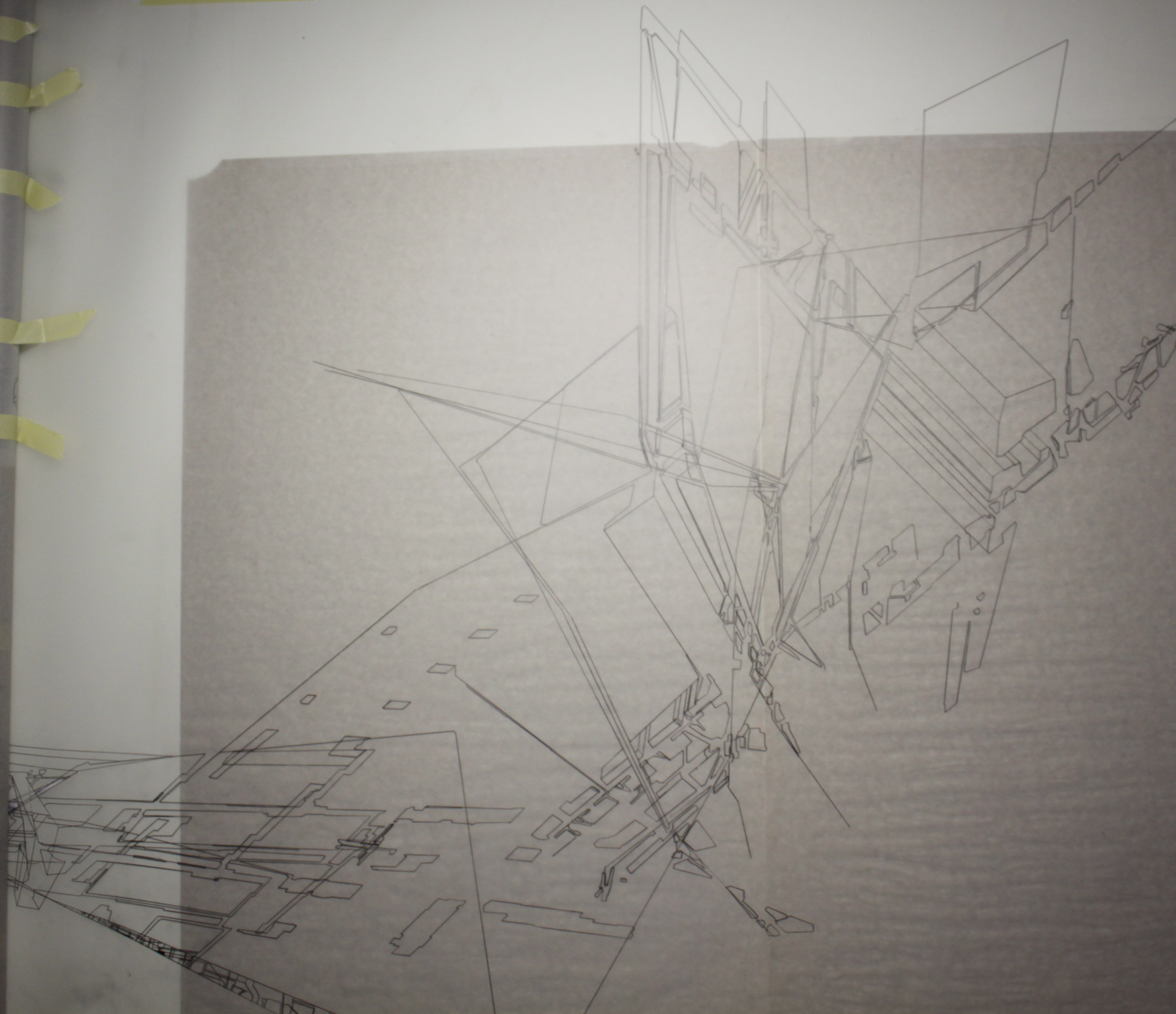
### **Conceived and Perceived Space**

Space is conceptualized by us as a static, objective set of measurements: Conceived Space [01]. From the moment you step in as a human figure and are there to observe, space is perceived in a way that is unattainable for the conceived space to represent. It is that 'lived space' or 'social space' discussed by Lefebvre that attains a performative environment, between 'conceived and 'perceived' space, where I would like to contextualise this shift from one drawing to another.

[01] Lefebvre, H.: The Production of Space, (trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith); Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 1991







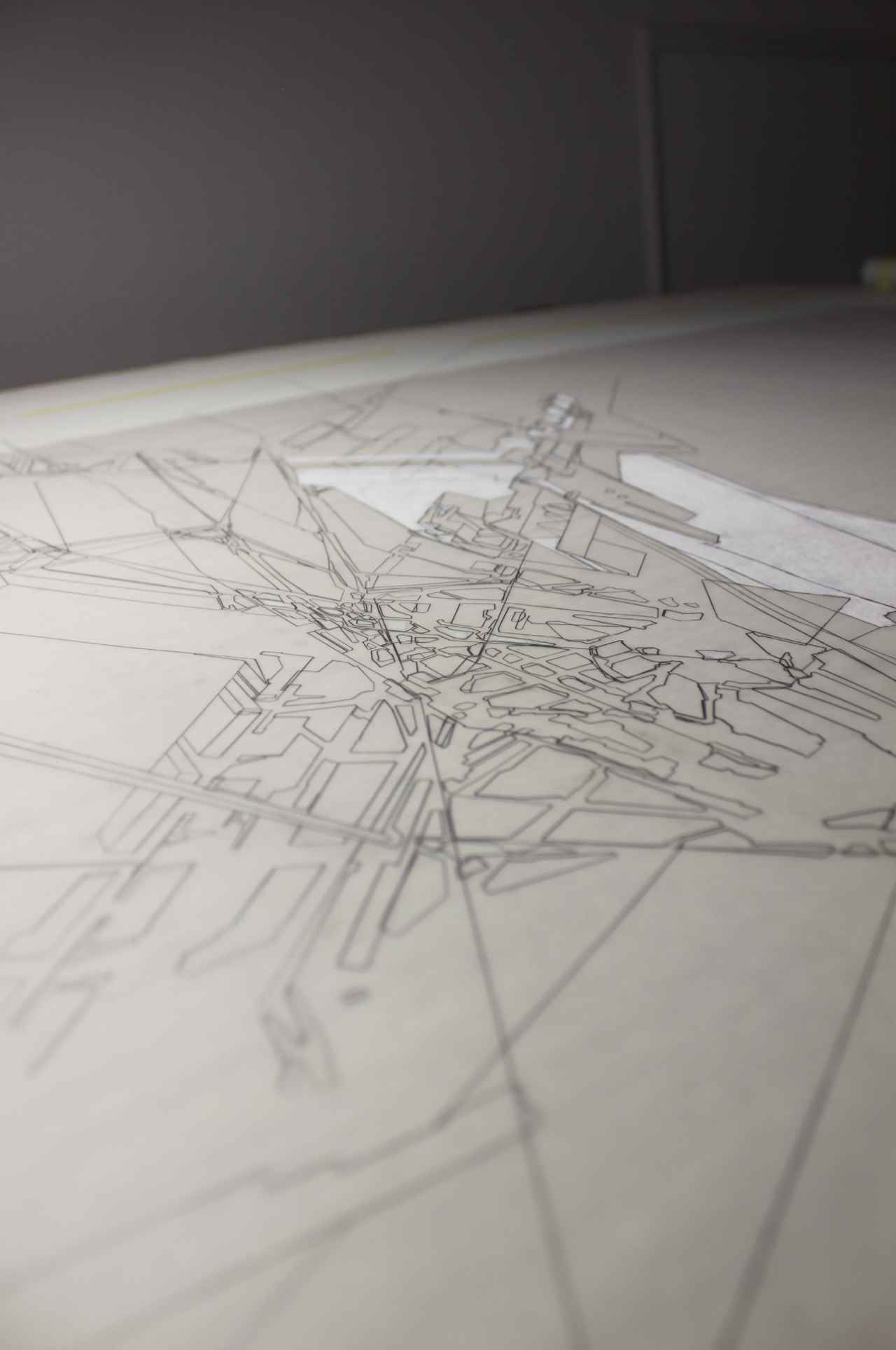
Due to the size of the drawing -3500mm by 840mm) -it is rolled up from left to right as I go along, about 500mm at a time. On the left side of the drawing board, the rolled up paper has been drawn on. On the right side sits the roll of empty paper.

This practical solution that is due to space constraints allows no overview at any point in time in the drawing process. There is no standing back and assessing the composition that is building up from left to right other than the one I currently draw on, which relates to the previous drawing through projection.

Although it is practised this way for pragmatic reasons, it makes you consistently concentrate on the detail in front of you and up close, instead of assessing how you think something should look like from a *removed* point of view. I refer here to the speculative relationship that is articulated between the elements, very much like the 'bottom up' principle Stan Allen refers to when he speaks about the field condition [01].

The overview over the drawn work remained hidden for two months as I completed the drawing.





The nine photographs on this and the three following spreads are a few of many photos of work in progress I take to assess the drawing while I am drawing.

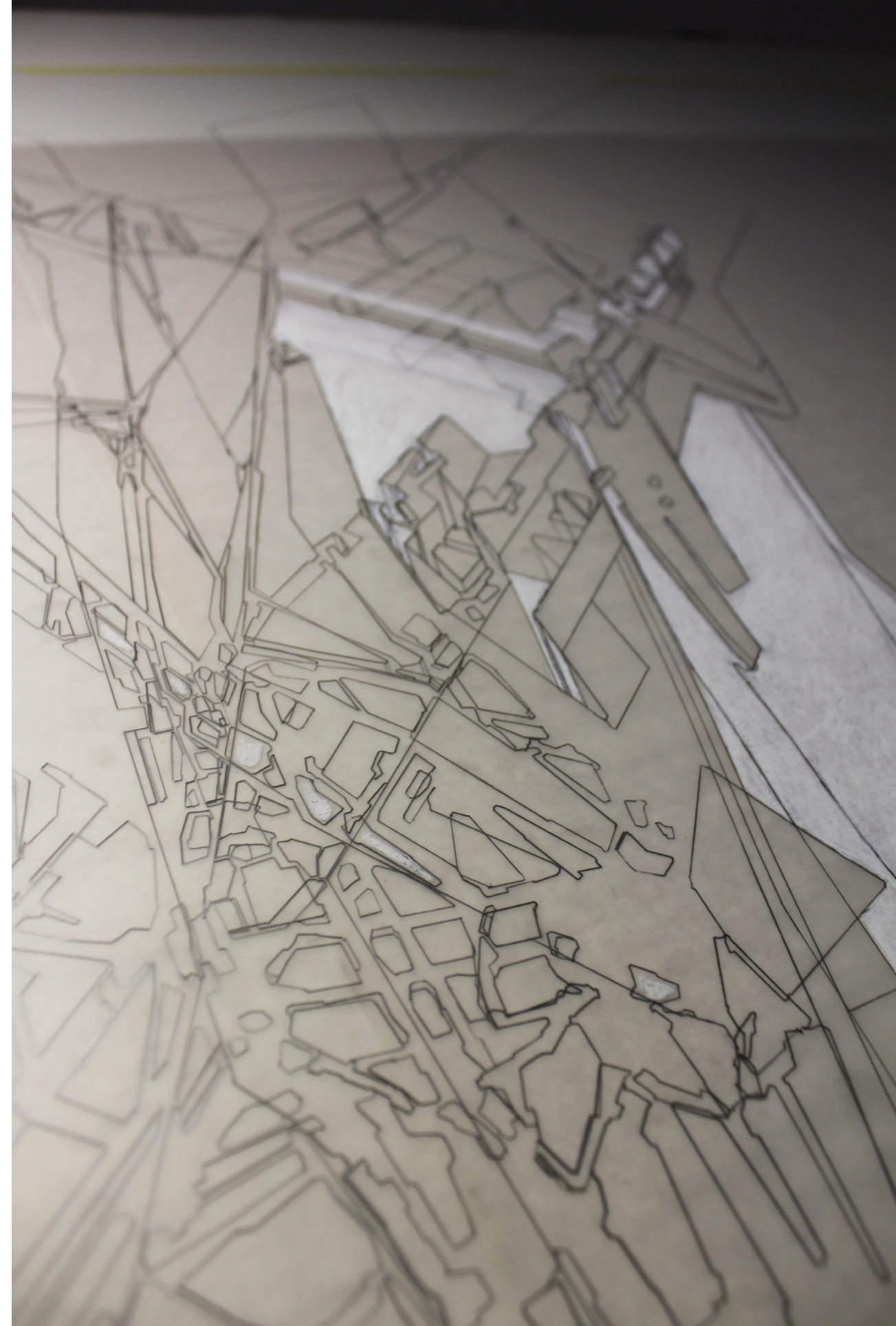
I use a selection of these to in turn construct the next drawing.

I take the photographs at an angle towards the drawing plane, allowing the perspectival view to tease out spatial speculation.

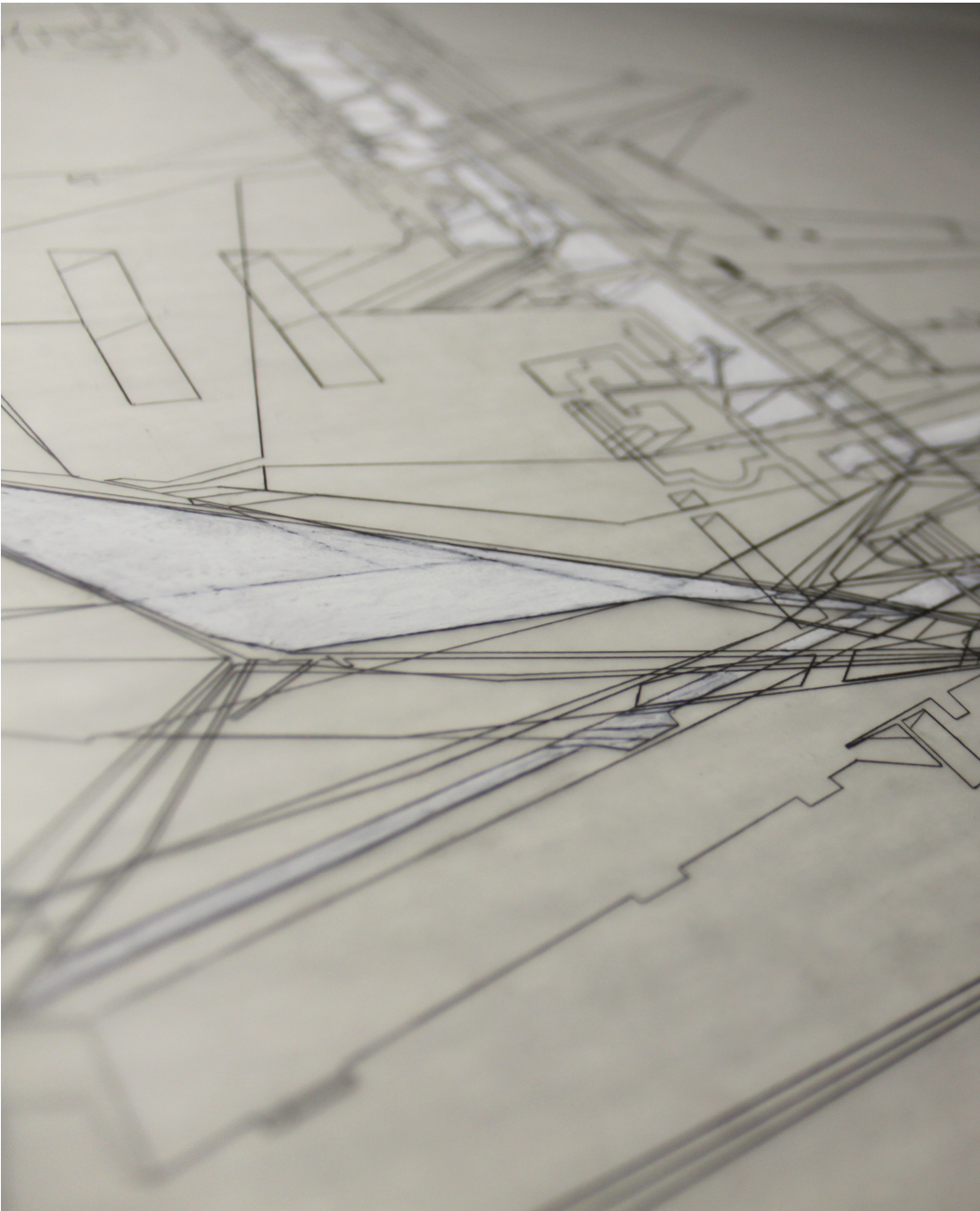
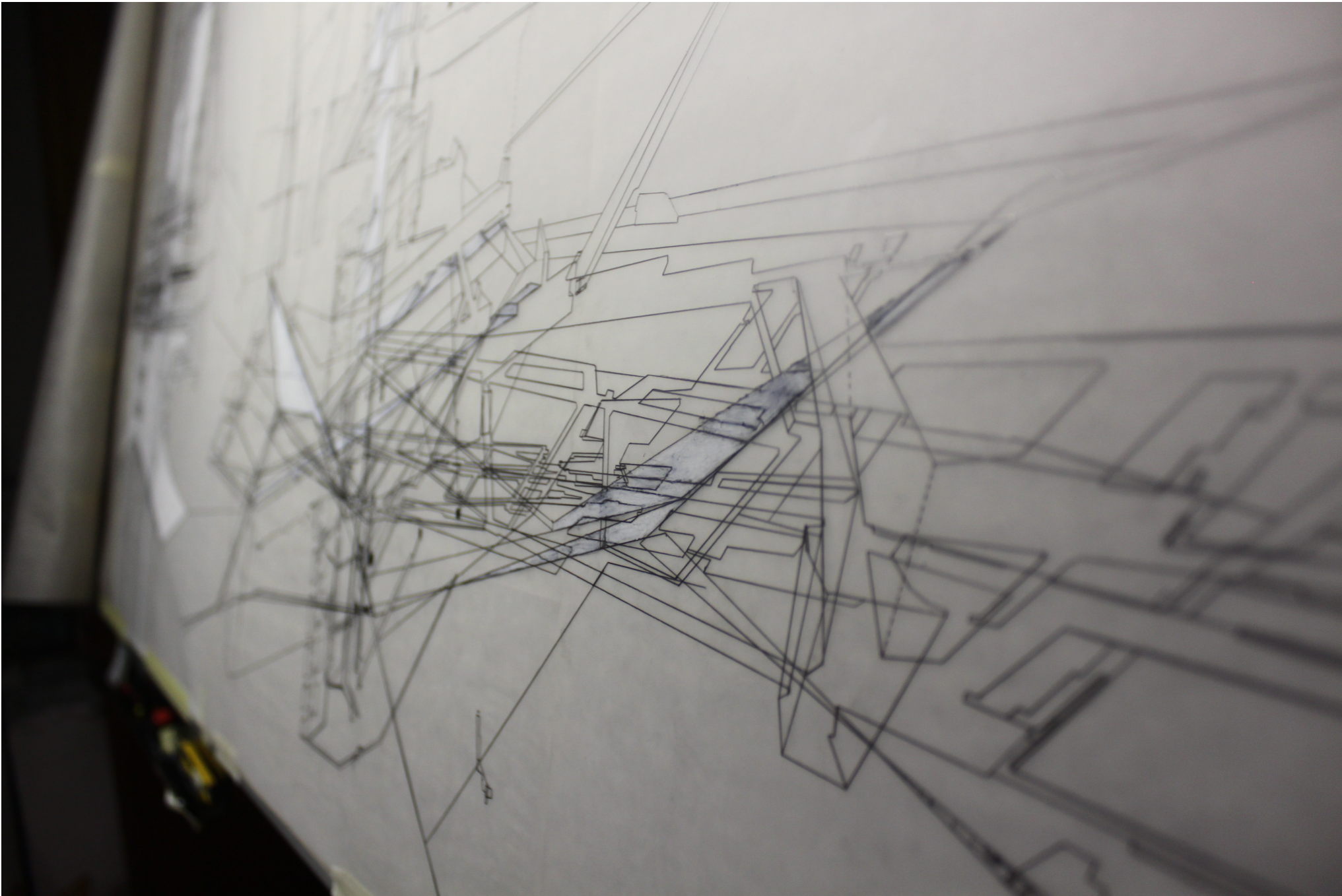
There is a pleasure in finding new entry points into the drawing or new point of views towards the drawing. The lens of a camera becomes yet another device to discover the speculative nature of a drawing, it changes the way I look at the drawing and how I subsequently after putting the camera back down, further develop the drawing.

While I am drawing in one line thickness, this drawing has no foreground or background, there is no figure nor ground, there is no fixed hierarchy only the field that changes depending on how I redirect it.

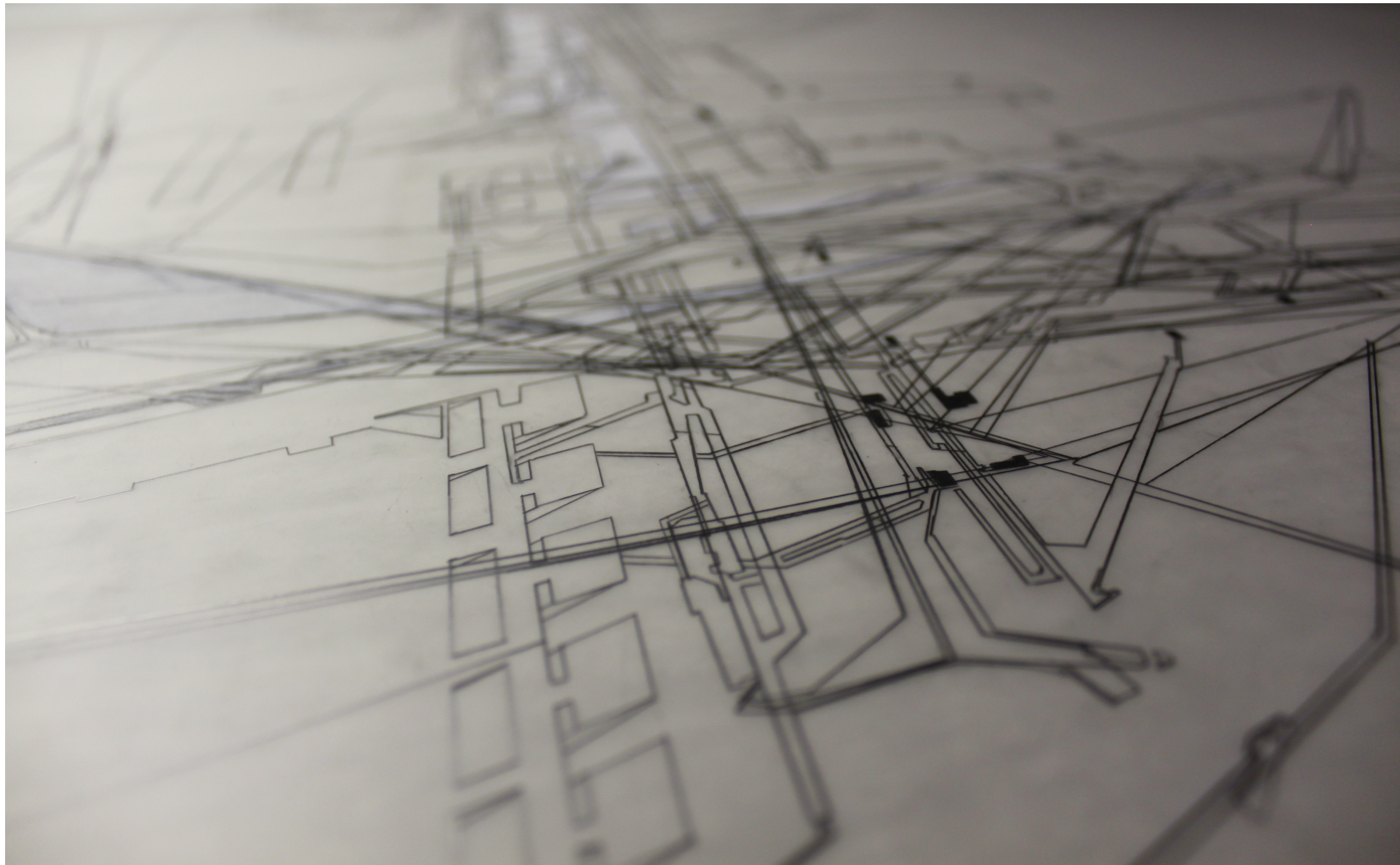
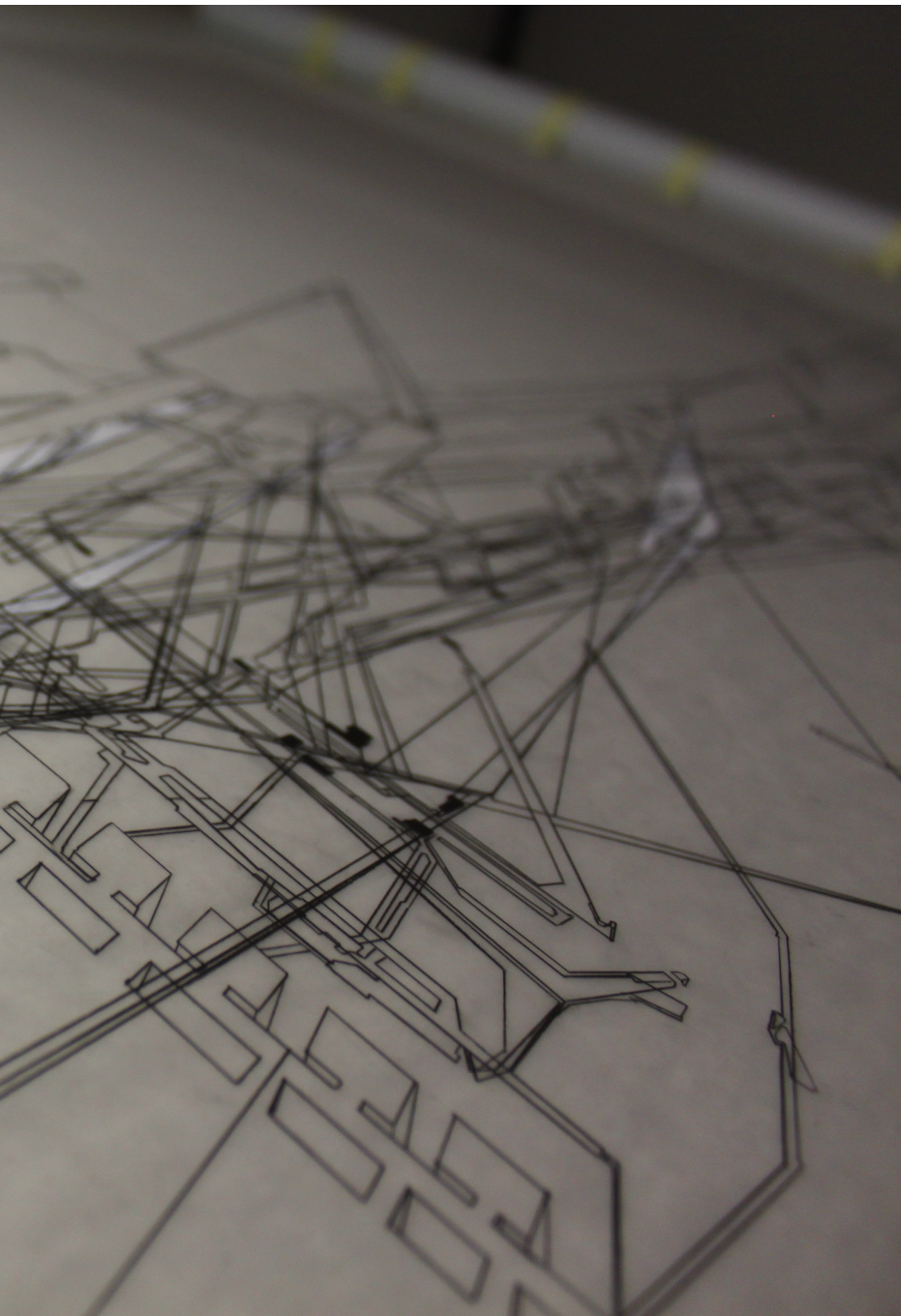
The camera produces framed views, partial views that focus on one portion at the time, allowing the rest of the drawing to become background.



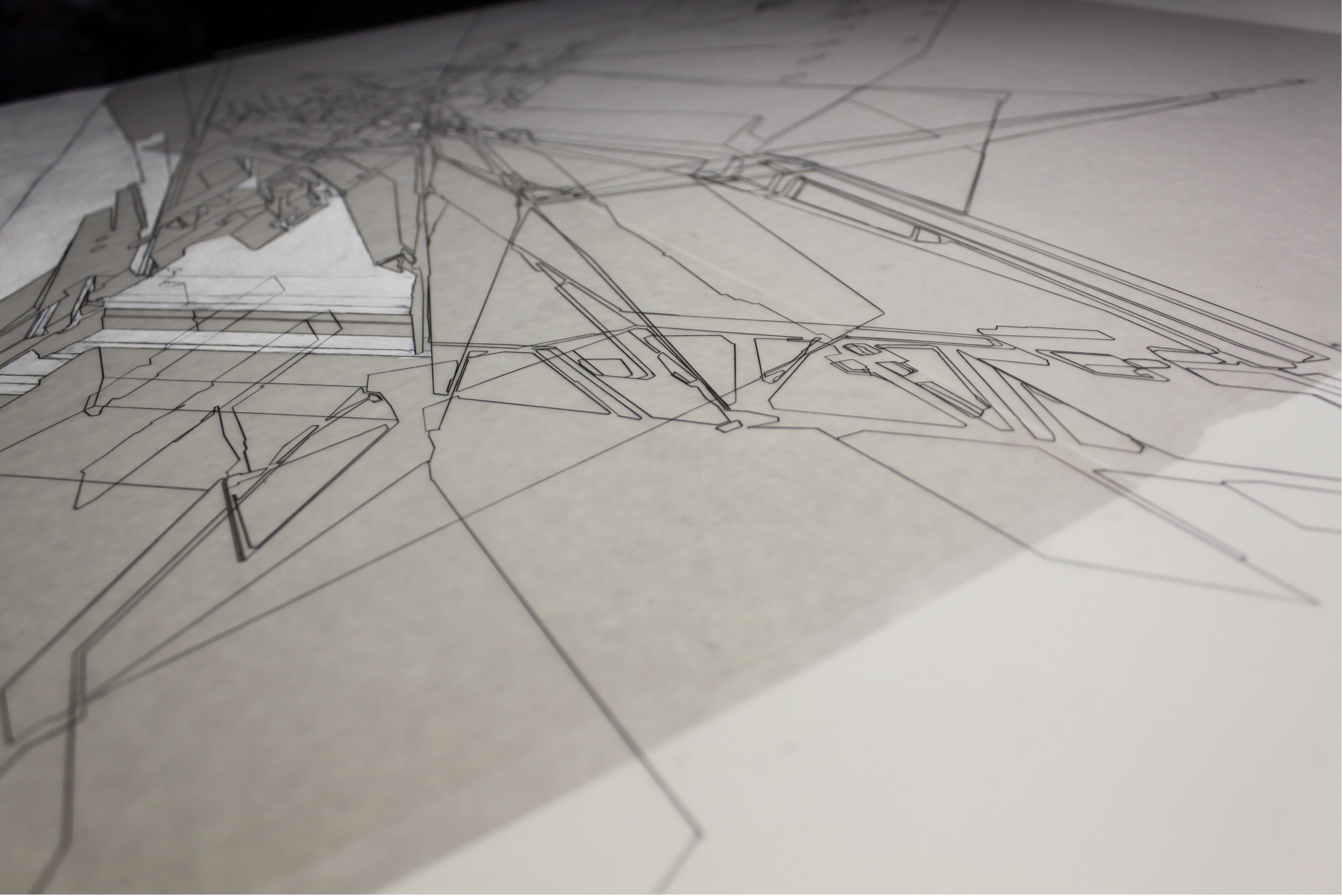




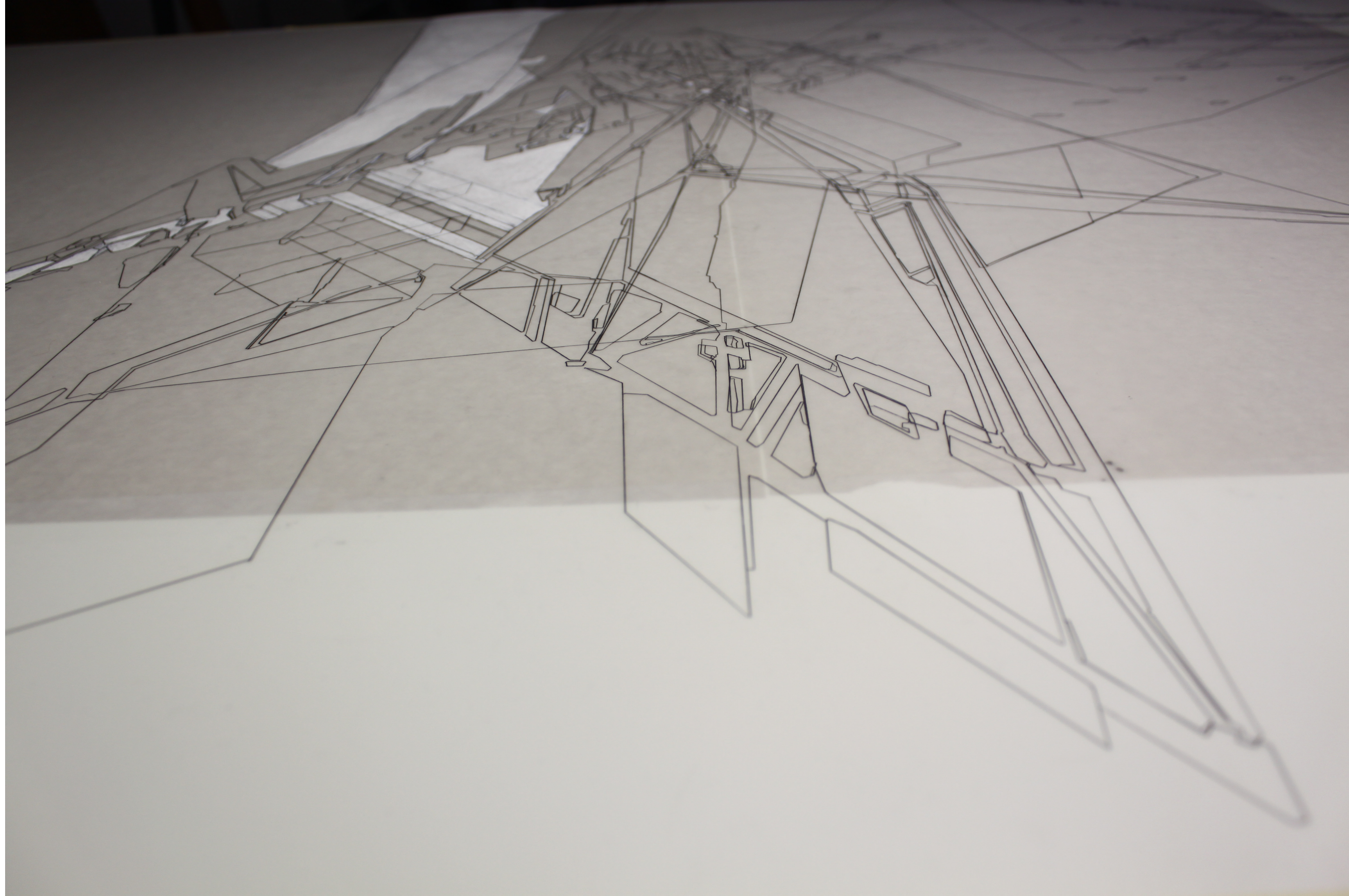




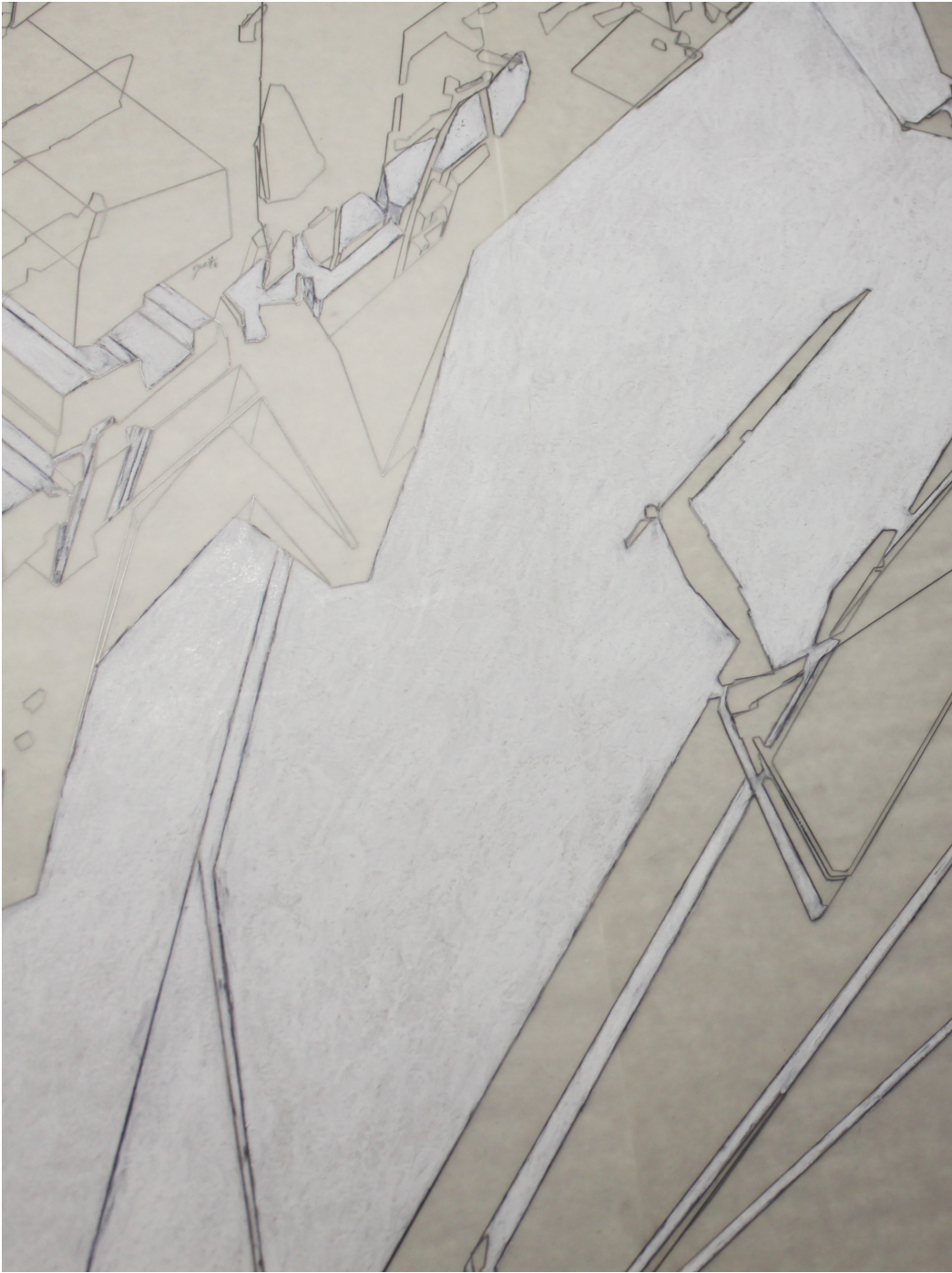
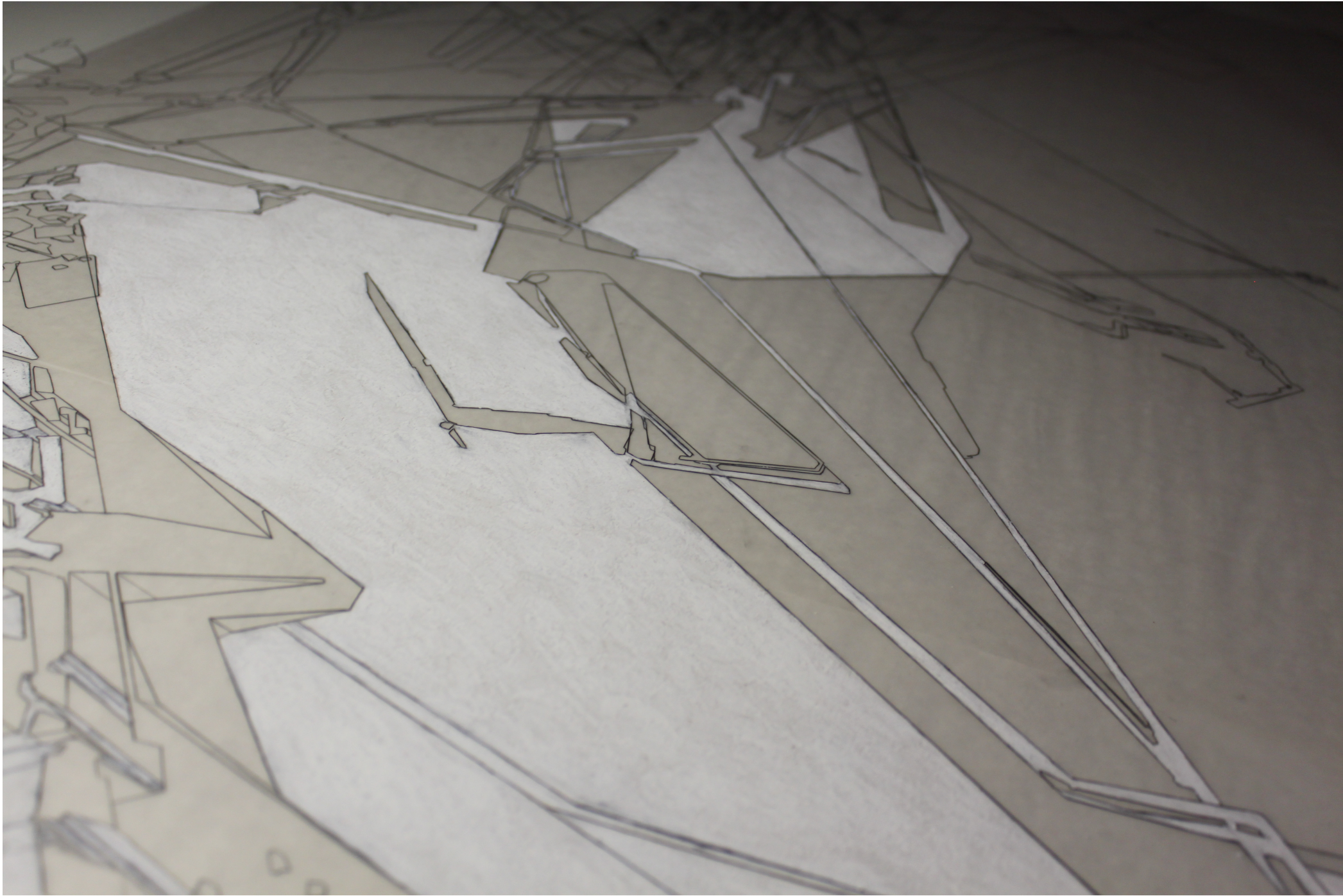




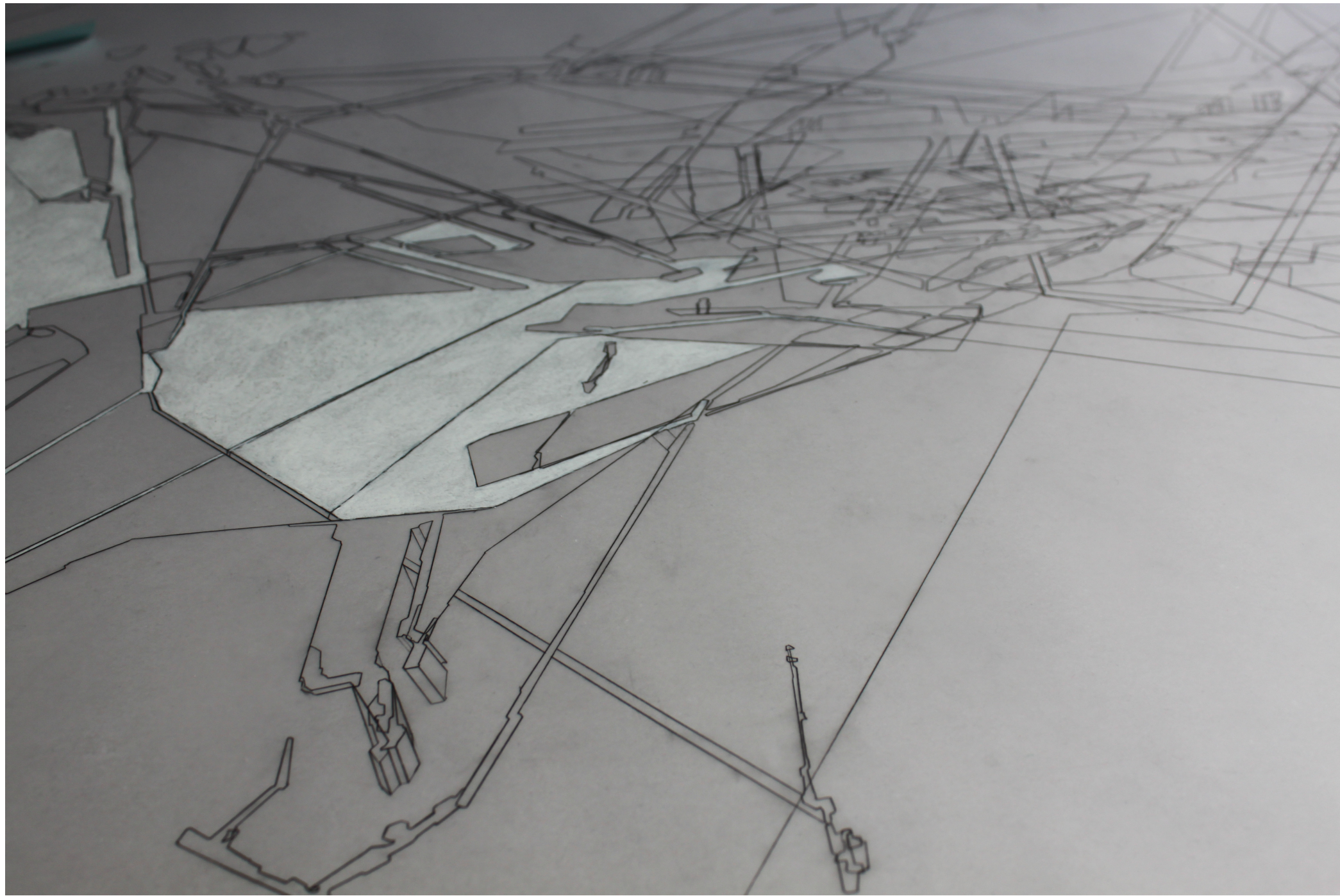




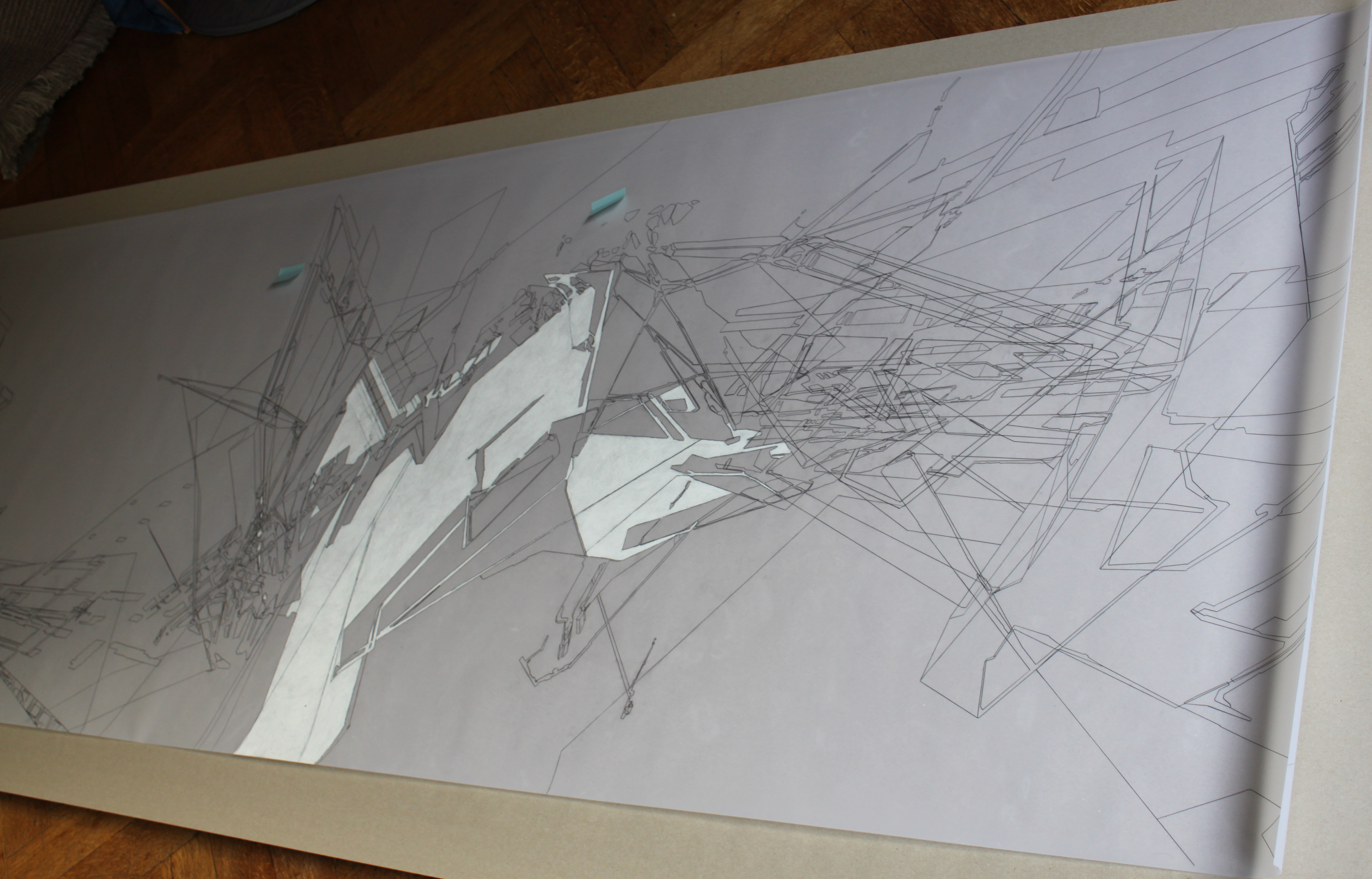














Once the drawing process came to an end, I cut off the empty roll on right and rolled the scroll across the floor.

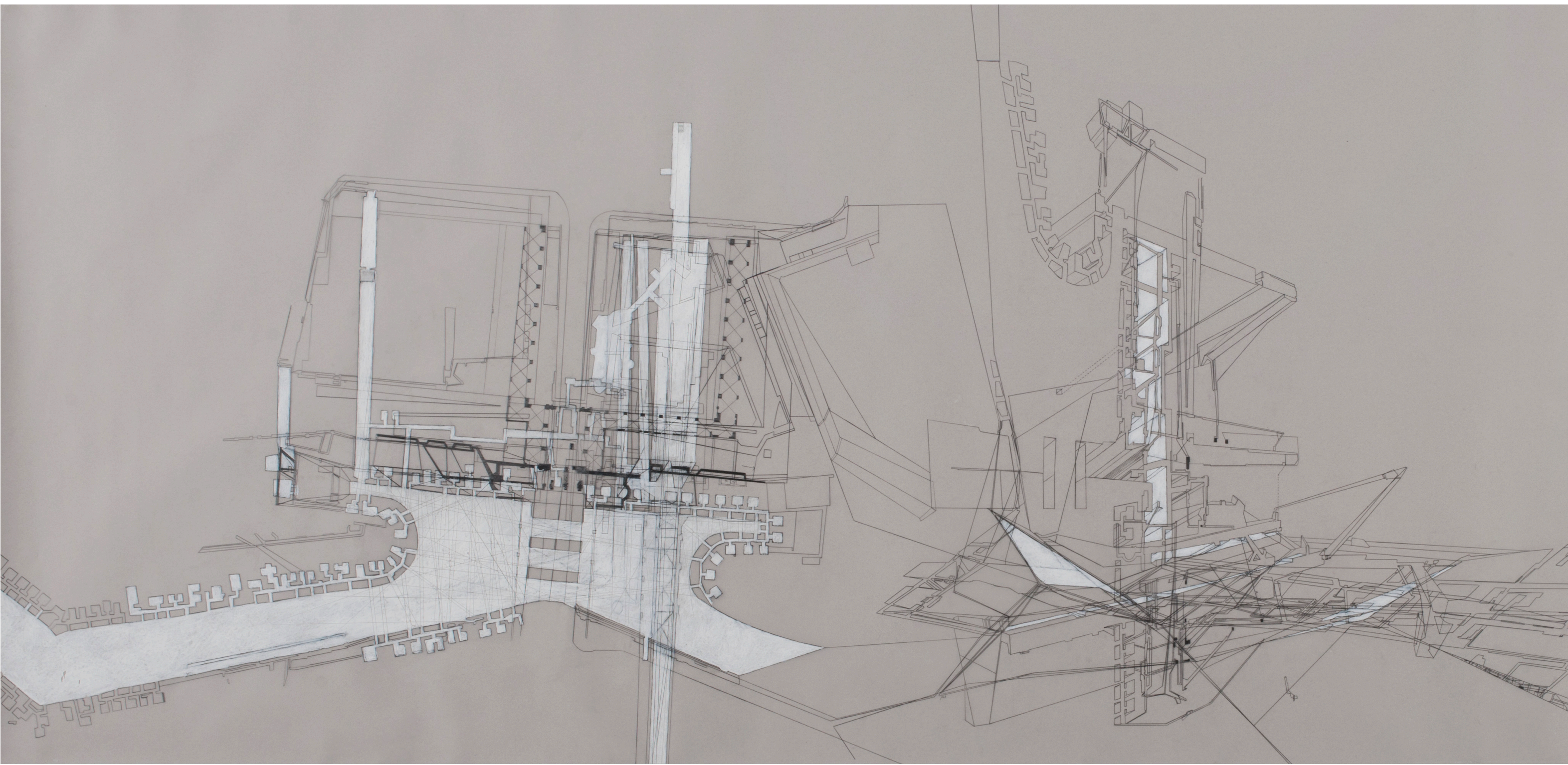
I could now see that the nature of the drawing changes with every step taken. The resolution increases as you read the drawing from left to right.

Now that the drawing is unrolled I notice that the drawing should be viewed from different positions. The quality of the drawing does not lay in the overview. This drawing should not be hung vertically on a gallery wall: it should be placed horizontal, just about 300 mm below eye level.

I have made this drawing from different point of views, finding entry points into the drawing and allowing them to lead to augmented speculative resolution.

Placing the drawing horizontal, allows the viewer to take positions towards the drawing, and find entry points into the drawing. From the moment one finds an entry point, there is an understanding that follows, which puts one at ease with what is seen.







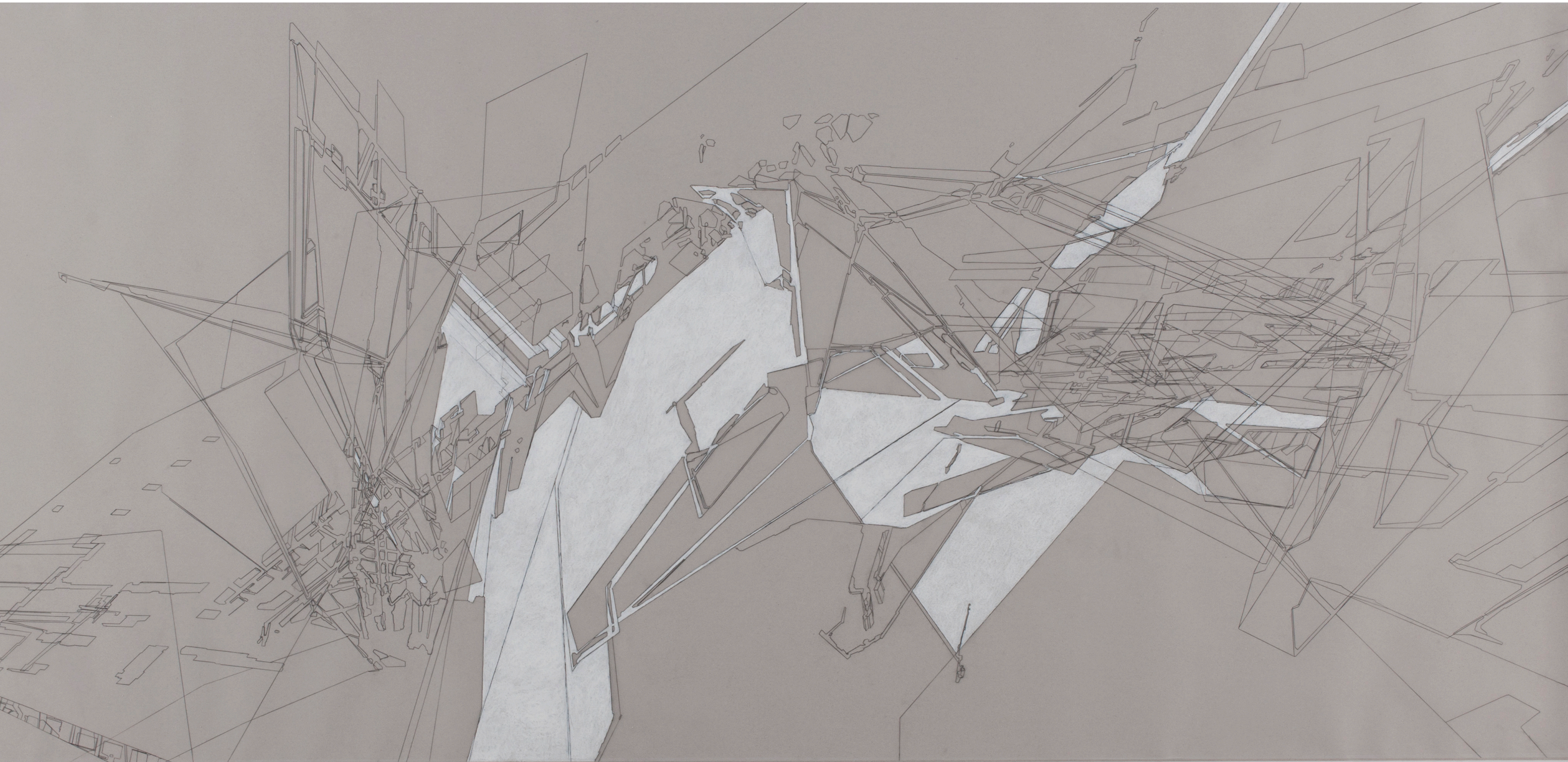


Photo by Michael Delausnay

*The Gate Drawings, 2013, pencil and white china marker on film, 3500mm by 840mm  
Exhibited at Galerie d'Architecture, Paris, France; 2013-14*





*Photo of the start of the demolition of the entrance gate in Valletta, Malta*



## Perceived Space and its representation

Space is conceptualised as a static set of measurements, conceived space. From the moment you step into a space as a human figure, space is being perceived; perceived in a way that is unattainable for the conceived space to represent.

I contextualise this PhD study in this ‘lived space’ or ‘social space’, [01] which attains a performative environment between ‘conceived’ and ‘perceived’ space. How does one draw this ‘Perceived Space’?

[1] Lefebvre, H.:The Production of Space, (trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith); Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 1991

Extracts from ***Inevitable Reconstructions***, a paper co-authored by Ephraim Joris and Riet Eeckhout, *May 2014*  
The paper addresses history and local identity through a teaching practice and complements allographic drawings with strategies of autographic representations.

In this article, we describe our teaching practice as part of an interdisciplinary practice in order to accommodate a synergy between the description of objective propositions (i.e. Conceived Space) and the description of the ostensible (i.e. Perceived Space) in relation to an architecture practice where each project aims to address both historic and current aspects specific to the site. As architects in practice and education we see the observation of space as deeply rooted in a cultural and socio-political history. As such, we actively acknowledge what Henri Lefebvre describes as Social Space; a space that is ultimately experienced and not merely objectively observed [1].

Our work is therefore is not set in linear reference to a previous time-frame yet acknowledges history as a network of intersecting timelines. These intersecting timelines, suggest something resembling a fabric of history, a woven mesh, as opposed to merely a linear thread. This allows us to look at urban sites through multiple pasts that still resonate in the present. An important output of this particular viewing of history is a mode of thinking in which it becomes increasingly more difficult to think outside or after history and is much more appealing to sustain within its mesh of time. In this way, we are confronted with the study of history beyond the scholastic notion of objectivism and serial events. Instead we can look at histories as simultaneous drifts of story telling drafted by particular zeitgeists, constructed and deconstructed to appear seemingly galvanized. [4]

Too often, in the narration of history, such as is seen in exhibitions, theatre and film but also architecture, history is portrayed through the notion of a false unity or ‘pure historical time frame’. This supports the narration of a history that follows a preset historical classification system; separating Renaissance painting from baroque sculpture and so forth.

In real life, objects and spaces from many periods, old and new surround us simultaneously; any pursuit to exclude such mix-ups and overlaps seems to accommodate a sense of denial.

In ‘The Production of Space’, Henri Lefebvre describes how our western industrialized world overwhelms us with concepts of objectifying abstraction. With this, he refers to the inherent characteristic of a consumer society wherein everything can be turned into a traded object. This occurs in such a way that even sensory aspects of our everyday life are dealt with in terms of quantifiable commodities and categories. He describes how concepts of objectifying abstraction stand at the basis of a professional authority, such as architecture, to describe and engage with abstract space. Such authority privileges the element of ‘conceived space’ (mathematically qualified and conceptualized space) and represses the element of experienced space or ‘perceived space’. This observation leads Lefebvre to distinguish three categories of spaces, what he calls ‘fields’. They are: physical space (conceived as a product of processes of thinking, abstracting, measuring, categorising, etc.); and mental space (perceived through experience, memory, allegory, smell, touch, etc.) form the basis. The third field that he describes as social space, a space that can only be lived and that is a combination of physical space and experienced space. As a result, it becomes a container of social myths and narratives.

When we deploy our teaching practice as part of an interdisciplinary practice navigating between allographic and autographic it is to accommodate the study of this lived space.

To allow students to produce architectural proposals that are not just an answer to physical or programmatic issues but something much more complex. It is the idea of social space; lingering everywhere in the city but, as it appears to us, yet too often overlooked.

Lefebvre argues that our basic understanding of the world is devised by a sensory spatial relationship between our body and the world. Our understanding of space is in direct correlation to the understanding of our bodies spatial presence, long been suppressed by Cartesian duality. His central claim, that space is a social product, directly challenges the predominant western (Cartesian) “idea that empty space is prior to whatever ends up filling it.” [6]. “Western philosophy has betrayed the body; it has actively participated in the great process of metaphorization that has abandoned the body; and it has denied the body.” [7] Lefebvre describes the body, as simultaneous subject and object and can therefore not tolerate the conceptual division between body and space.

[1] Lefebvre, H.:The Production of Space, (trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith); Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 1991

[4] The Burra Charter. 1999. US/ICOMOS Scientific Journal, 1(1), 38-47. Originally published 1979

[6] Joris, E. 2011, ‘Between Material and Culture; Reciprocating and active gaze towards history in: MONU nr 13, editing Urbanism, Board Publishers, Rotterdam

[7] Eisenman, Peter, Diagram Diaries, London, Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1999







### The nature of the drawing

From the moment one takes a standpoint in a space (going from conceived to perceived space), the nature and the scale of the drawing changes. The drawing with the historical plan information is described here as a *representational drawing*. The information brought together is of notational nature and belongs to an architectural language we understand and know the meaning of.

When the field drawing is redrawn from a particular point of view and consequent new iterations of the field conditions reveal themselves, the nature of the drawing changes. At this pivotal point, the nature of the drawing changes from a representational to a non-representational drawing. The lines, surfaces and articulations are no longer notations we have a communal understanding of, they do not represent, they present themselves. The field drawing reveals speculative aspects embedded within the representation, and they reveal themselves in a 1:1 non-representational manner.

As the field condition changes, the nature, scale and content of the drawing changes.

The observational hand drawing engages with what is visible in the medium that represents something (a photograph or drawing). The hand drawing engages with the represented information to a degree that aspects of the representation come to a point -a pivotal point- where the drawing starts to perform in a speculative way. This pivotal point is a threshold moment in the drawing process -very much like Heidegger's reference to *poiesis* as a 'bringing-forth': *when something moves away from its standing as one thing to become something else*. That moment is what i like to refer to as the 'non-representational moment, the moment of becoming. The moment the observed is presented, and not merely represented.







## Introduction to Part II : The Complexity Of The Specific

The field drawing brings together field conditions essential to the site. I refer to the site as a situation or event because of the active and dynamic nature of conditions governing the site.

Embedded within a site, be it a plot of land, an object or an action performed by a person or an event, there is cultural meaning we cannot let go of. There are associations, cause and effect understandings that we have -even with a still image- that crystalise the continuation principle of how we understand life as it unfolds on a site. One can look at an arrested moment of a site, when all conditions are holding still for the sake of clarity, but one is aware that it is a falsification of the continuity of how life unfolds). I use the word 'situation' instead of the traditional word 'site' as it seems to be more in touch with the active and complex performative nature of a place. In the context of this PhD there is no such thing as a static environment; a static environment implies a simplification of the specific content.

The word situation or circumstance points at the specific nature of an unfolding event. Specificity is the critical ingredient that controls why something is the way it is.

Specificity implies complexity.

This complexity is what the field drawing actively wants to hold on to. The field drawing wants to hold on to and handle the situation without curtailing its complexity by simplifying or abstracting it to a degree whereby specific aspects disappear.

When we speak, we think in a language based on the structure of categories. By definition, this reduces the complexity of the specific. If we want to come closer to an understanding of a situation, these abstracting strategies reach a shortfall as they imply a reduction of thought. When we think the concept kitchen, we see a kitchen in its pragmatic notion. It seems like a handicap to be forced willingly into this categorical restraint.

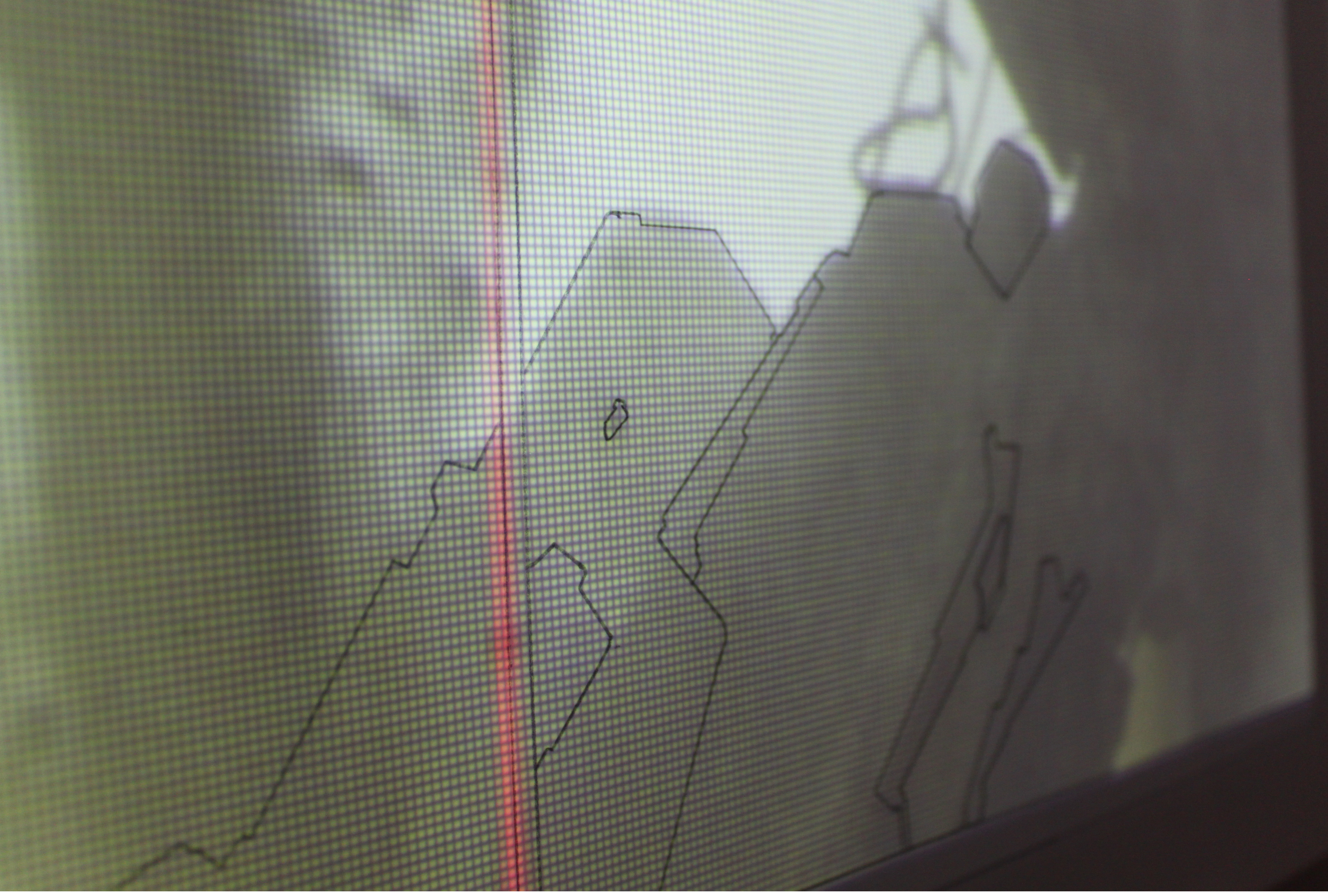
Not only are we abstracting the specificity of a situation while thinking about it, we then will transfer the abstracted thought into a 'representation' of the situation. For example, the notational plan of a kitchen, in general called design drawing. This is a further reduction of the specific situation.

By now we are far removed from the initial event that holds all the essential conditions it constitutes. How do we get back there? More importantly, how can the representation of the event remain connected with the event itself?

One way of thinking about this, if we want the representation and our thoughts about it to remain closely connected with the situation and its essential parts, is to consider that the mind and the representation should not have left it in the first place.

In this chapter, I will expand on some tools I have devised in an attempt to stay close to a situation or a site.







## Tracing in Critical Surrender

A print of a photograph is laid under tracing paper. Or, a situation is projected onto the drawing board.

The image is visible on the drawing board and it is large. The object becomes dominant in the room and in the drawing space. The drawing space is the area of the drawing board, the fixed malleable interface. You sit in the projected image.

The image is so large that when you sit at the drawing board at *drawing distance*, you are submerged in the given data. This device allows you to reside so close to the graphic evidence of the situation, that the distance between you and the projected information diminishes. It momentarily isolates the one that draws with the data.

The drawing board is large, the sheet I draw on is large, I don't need to see the borders of the drawing board or the drawing. The main reason for drawing large is to anticipate more detail. Standing close to the work and without an overview allows for momentary detachment from the embedded (cultural) meaning of the observed object and the relational environment it is situated in (the relationship it has with its direct environment), allowing a different exploration to take place in the intensity of the drawing.

## Resisting the Representational

When the size of the situation takes on the scale of the body -the length of your arms, the size of your body frame- a different relationship and intensity occurs, that augments the observational ability.

Size and physicality are important in this instance; they facilitate the surrender to the situation. This critical surrender moves preconceived thoughts or unconsciously held guards one holds to the background. [01] It allows you to resist the representation presented by the footage and discover what lies underneath.

Tracing is used as a method to observe and absorb information and subsequently re-inject information as one gains understanding. A selection process through hand-eye coordination articulates a chosen context. Composition and speculation of information are embedded within the line (the informed line) [3]

This is an investigation of aspects contained within the image, beyond the surface of what is visible. An investigation into aspects contained within the grid of the projection, contained within the pixel of what presents itself. [4]

Projecting onto a drawing board at large scale and sitting at the pixel end of the image, allows one to reside in a position so close to the representation that one can only see parts of the totality. In this instance, one is not able to reflect and take rationally informed decisions on what one sees. One is able to surrender to what is visible close up and cannot relate the pixel to the exact representational categories they belong. One starts to engage with a different thinking process resisting the representational.

[1] I refer to the term critical surrender as a conscious effort to make a drawing in an empty minded state, and surrender to the geometry [2] of what I see. The word critical in this term refers to a critical attitude towards what one formulates in one's mind about what is visible of the situation.

[2] Shape, size, relative position of lines surfaces and volumes

[3] the information embedded within the line

[4] When projecting an image onto the drawing board with a size beyond the usually acceptable dots per inch resolution, the grid of the image becomes visible. You are looking at the images' capacity to represent something being pushed to its limits.



*'Artist imbalance: The space between his head and his two hands', Dialogical project with Marc Godts (Artist), Drawn studies based on a film fragment by Marc Godts, White box manoeuvres: experiments on sitting, standing, laying down, crouching and walking. White Box, BOZAR, Brussels, 2012*





We tend to reduce or categorize our thoughts very quickly, we seem to decide immediately what is foreground and background, what is figure and what is ground, what is important and what is peripheral. The underlying urge while drawing is the quest for representation in drawing that embraces and can handle the complexity of observation and thought and avoids the reduction of it in this drawing process that is ultimately a design process.

This setup is a tool to resist categorization in order to take the mind and hand further away from the familiar. The aim is to investigate the unfamiliar and bring this in relation to what we know.

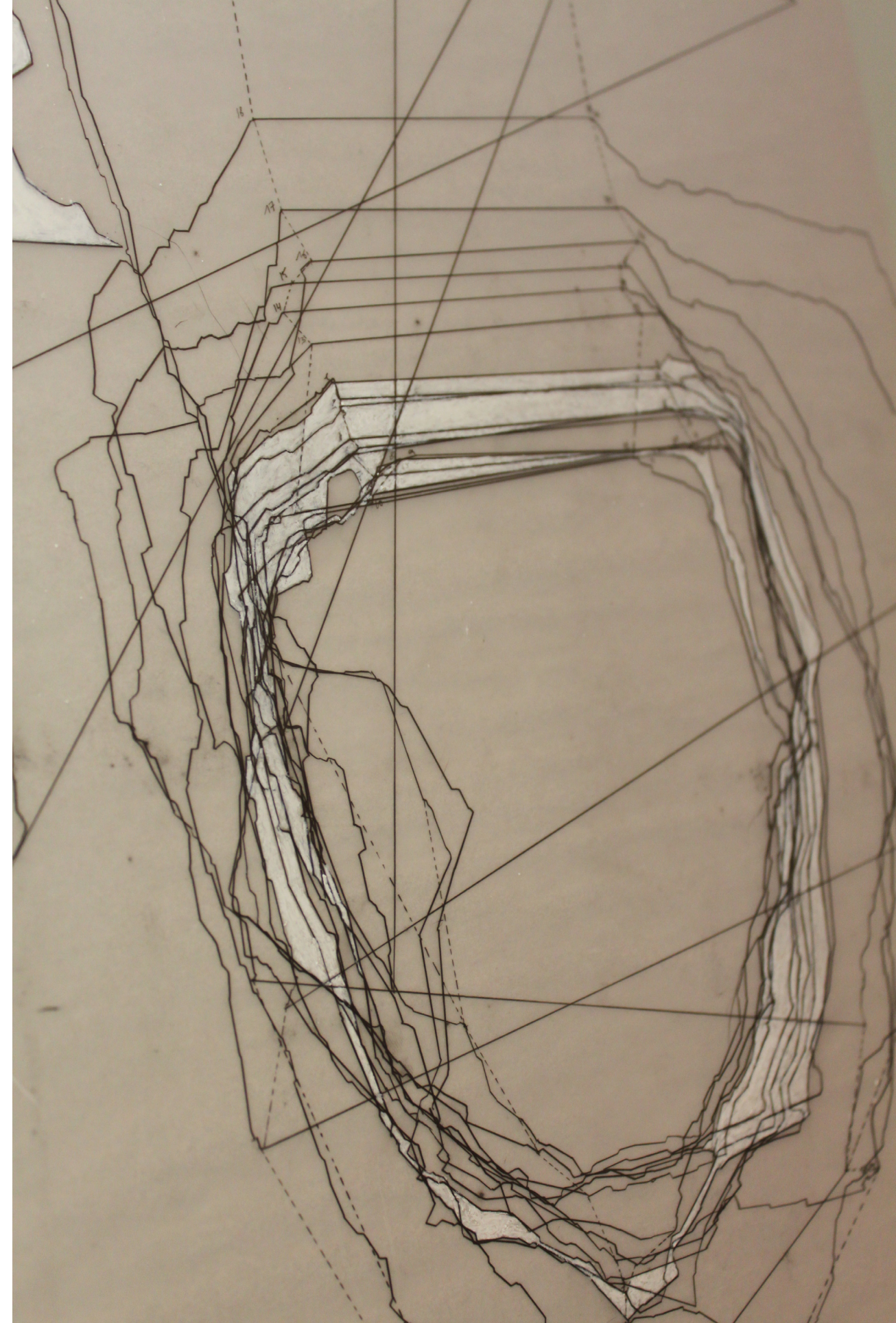
To think is not the same as to know, Rather, as Michael Newman writes ‘A thought is what interrupts knowledge, it breaks it open, makes a space for something new, which will eventually, if it is followed through, reorganise knowledge into a new configuration, which will need to be interrupted in its turn, endlessly.’ [01]

A thinking process is set in motion that attempts to dislocate form from the subject’s relationship with meaning and content.

My mind is not drawn to the urge to define what it is that I see, I am holding my mind in the composition of presented elements, their disposition and their internal relationship to each other. The mind engages with pure form aspects, formations, scale, density and texture tactility.

[01] Extract from ‘*Joelle Tuerlincks’s filmwork: Time, Multiplicity, Void*’; Michael Newman 2005

*Detail of ‘Artist in balance: The space between his head and his two hands’; 2014*



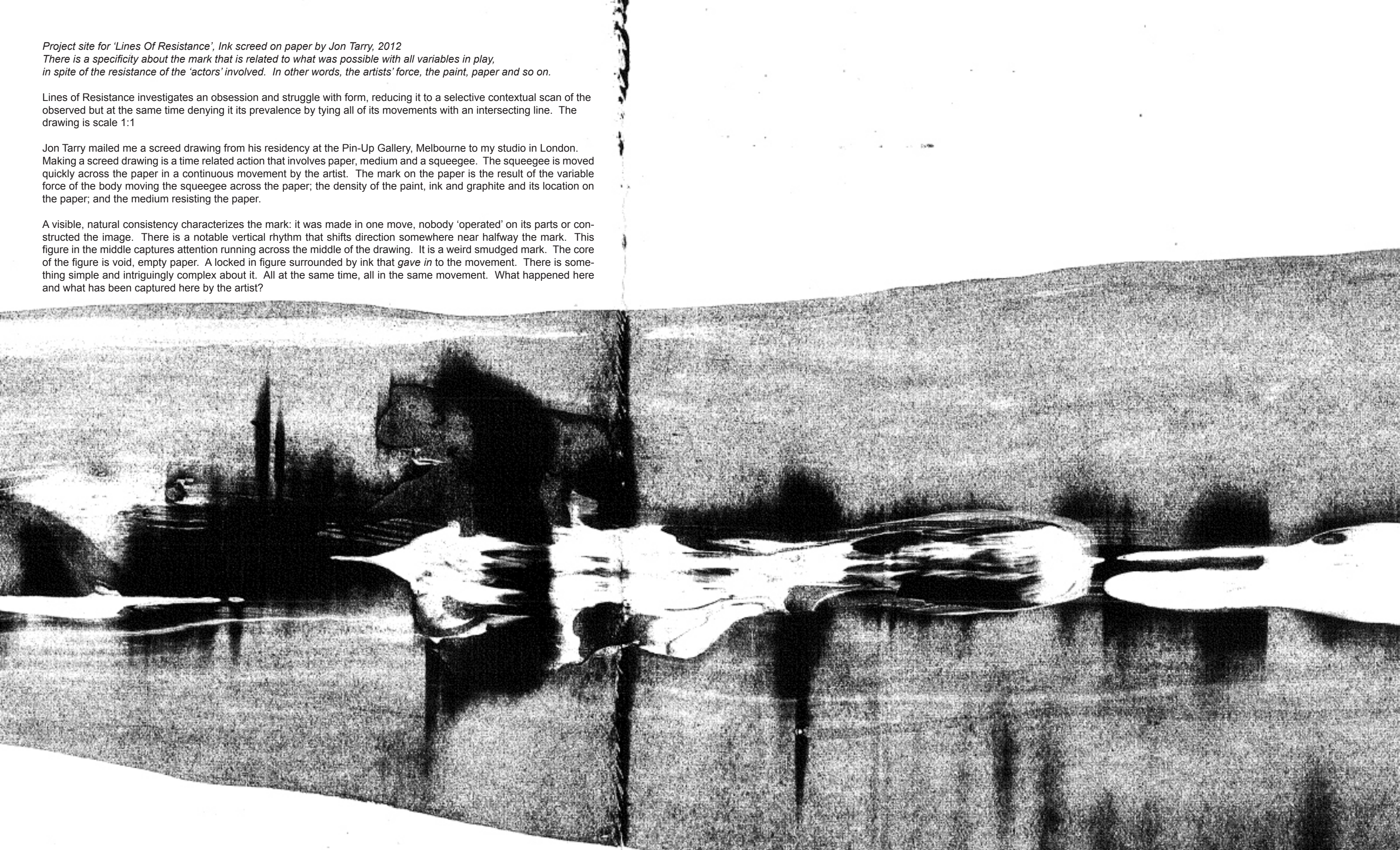


*Project site for 'Lines Of Resistance', Ink screed on paper by Jon Tarry, 2012*  
*There is a specificity about the mark that is related to what was possible with all variables in play,*  
*in spite of the resistance of the 'actors' involved. In other words, the artists' force, the paint, paper and so on.*

Lines of Resistance investigates an obsession and struggle with form, reducing it to a selective contextual scan of the observed but at the same time denying it its prevalence by tying all of its movements with an intersecting line. The drawing is scale 1:1

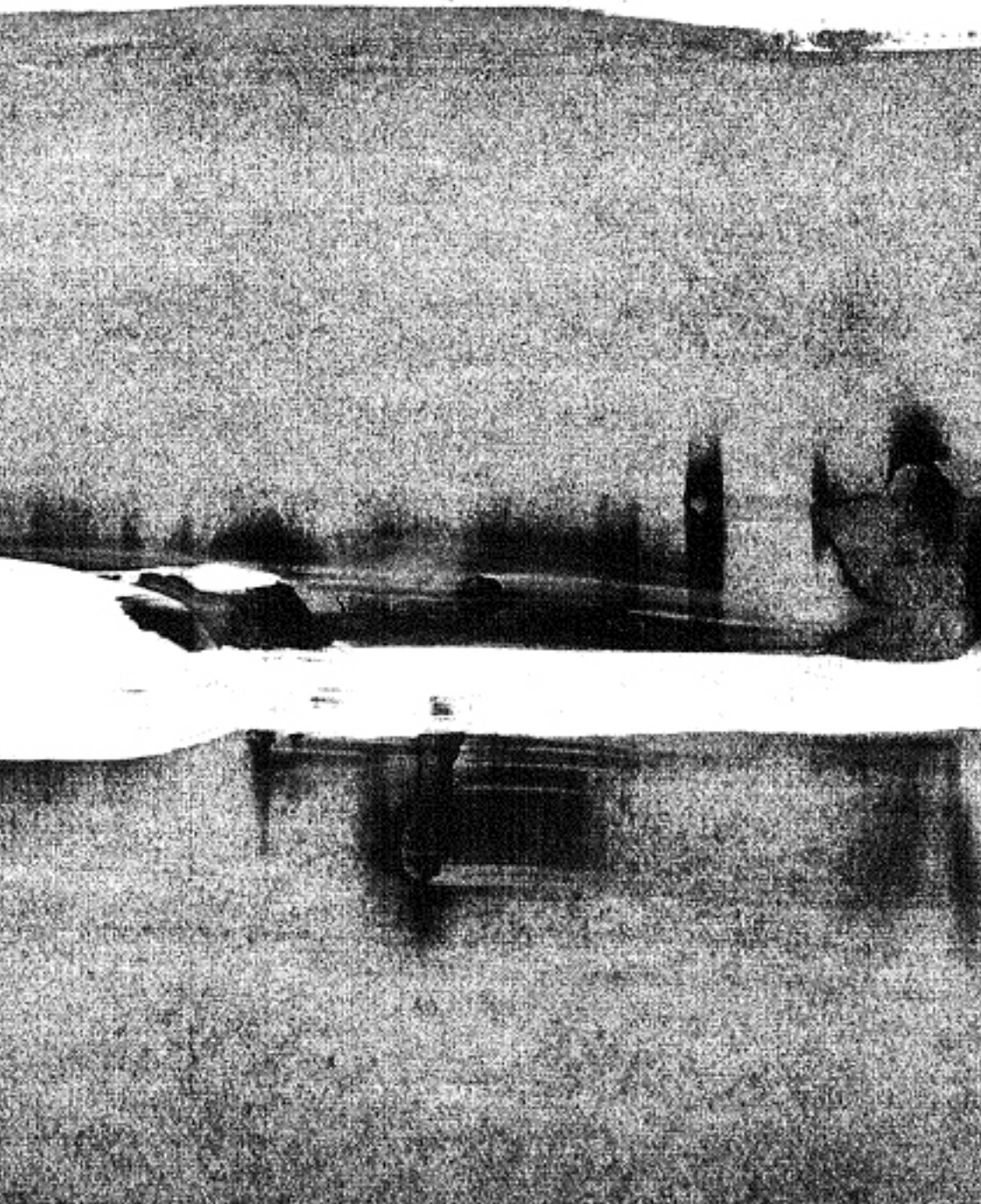
Jon Tarry mailed me a screed drawing from his residency at the Pin-Up Gallery, Melbourne to my studio in London. Making a screed drawing is a time related action that involves paper, medium and a squeegee. The squeegee is moved quickly across the paper in a continuous movement by the artist. The mark on the paper is the result of the variable force of the body moving the squeegee across the paper; the density of the paint, ink and graphite and its location on the paper; and the medium resisting the paper.

A visible, natural consistency characterizes the mark: it was made in one move, nobody 'operated' on its parts or constructed the image. There is a notable vertical rhythm that shifts direction somewhere near halfway the mark. This figure in the middle captures attention running across the middle of the drawing. It is a weird smudged mark. The core of the figure is void, empty paper. A locked in figure surrounded by ink that *gave in* to the movement. There is something simple and intriguingly complex about it. All at the same time, all in the same movement. What happened here and what has been captured here by the artist?





### Between Tacit and Propositional Understanding



To observe is the first act that enables understanding a situation. Skills in the trades and the arts were traditionally transferred from master to student by observing and repeating what the master did many times over. In this way, not only did students come to understand rationally the principles and successive actions performed (propositional knowledge) it also allowed the observer to come close to the embodied knowledge of the master, who held *tacit* knowledge.

Tacit knowledge is the refined embodied knowledge specific to the practitioner that cannot be captured by language; we can only see it through action. Tacit knowledge is knowledge that the practitioner knows he has but he cannot describe in terms other than his own performance. Tacit knowledge is subjective and personal. [1]

Language is a means of getting information from one mind to the other. Whilst different forms of language have particular possibilities for modifying the meaning they carry, tacit understanding is defined in opposition of these forms. It is not symbolically encoded, as it resides within the practitioner. [1]

Is the exclusive relationship between the 'rational abstracting categorical mind' (and its lingering representations) and understanding the 'complexity of the specific' problematic due to the level of abstraction it produces? If this is so, I might find answers though an opposite approach: the relationship between a situation and its tacit understanding because of its seemingly more direct connection.

When meticulously observing a situation, there is a simultaneous understanding that the experience isn't able to be fully captured though language. There is no real need to convey in words as it is slowly being understood on a pre-cognitive level.

Exclusively talking about, or constructing a relevant thought process does not come close to this embedded understanding. But drawing seems to for me.

More specifically, I think alternating between the two extreme ways of observing –categorical and logical observation on the one hand; embodied non-abstracting observing on the other. In my drawing practice I refer to this principle of alternative observation as '*stepping in and out of the drawing*'.

Drawing allows me to come closer to an understanding of specific content of a site, situation or action.

Consequently, there are some understandings brought about through drawing that I cannot talk about. When I attempt to communicate some of these aspects of drawing practice, descriptions merely circle around it.

In order to remain close to the situation I observe when drawing, the following outlines some of the lateral routes I construct. Explaining these lateral routes is an attempt to convey the embodied or tacit knowledge that has been developed critically through the research projects included in this PhD.

The question of how the research is conducted is complex. When a scientist completes a scientific experiment, the end result and its narration directly relate to the actions taken and results in a rational, logical description. This is because of the rational and logical nature of the procedure. The same experiment can be executed by a different of scientists and obtain identical results. However, in architecture, the procedure is very different. Every hand that draws, does it recognizably different.

As it is important to understand the quality of a scientific result through the manner in which it is conducted, I would like to elaborate on the tools I use in the process of observation though drawing.

'What's going on here?' Is a relevant first question when confronted with a situation's depth that is unknown to you. We have the tendency to quickly come to conclusion regarding what it is that is going on. I use drawing to spent time with a situation and to postpone a conclusion.

The time consumed by the drawing allows for the complexity of a situation to ground itself in the drawing.

When you hold a curious unknown object, you want to see it up close and hold it. You touch it and feel it's texture. Your hands palpate the surface and hold the volume at different distances from your eyes. You look at the object from different point of views trying to figure out what this object is telling you and how it relates to what you already know.

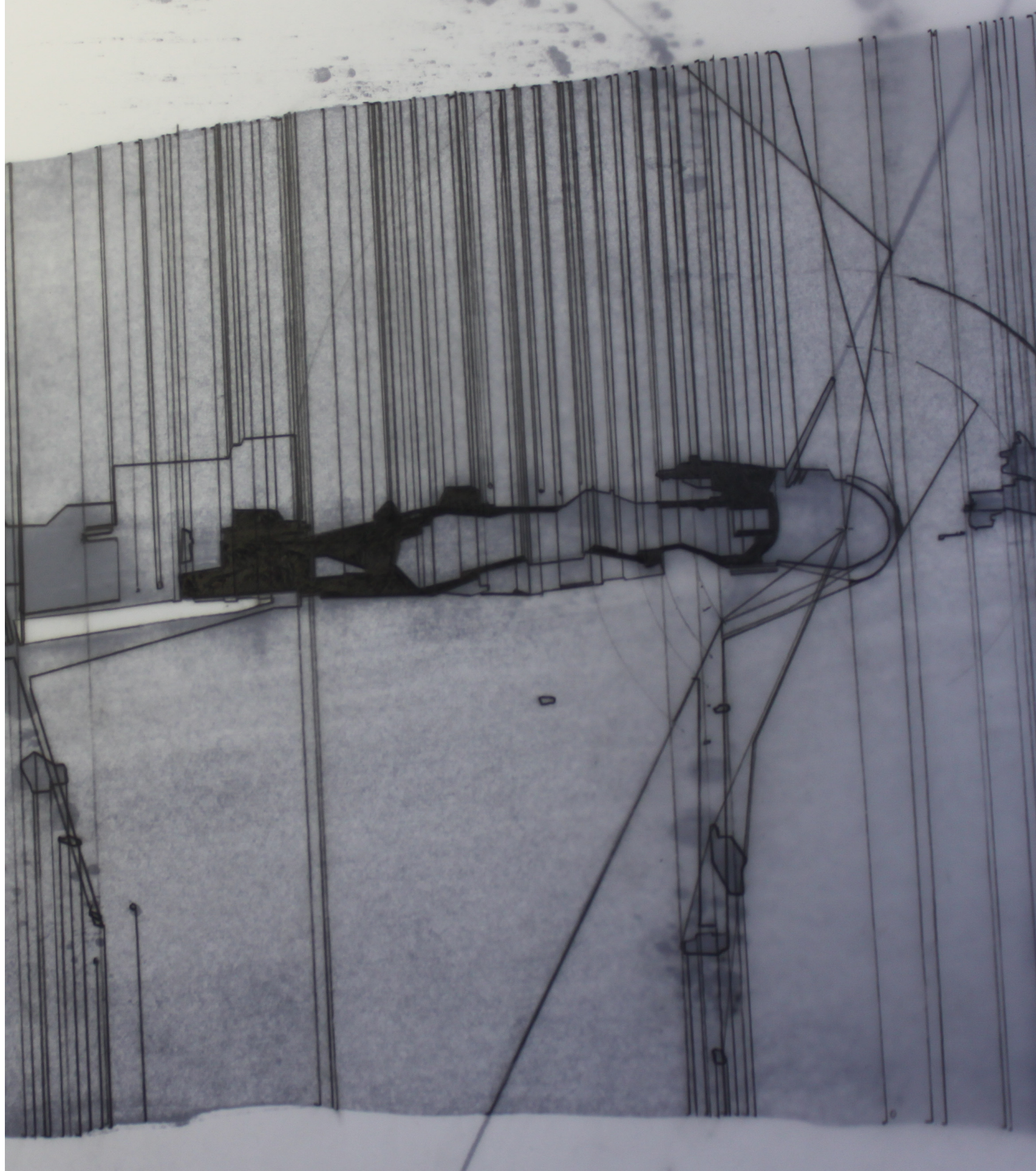


I overlay translucent film over the screed mark and I start tracing in pencil what I see. I explore the template underneath in a seemingly random manner to find the core and rhythm of its natural consistency. Every line that is drawn, from initial explorations to the finishing line, belongs to the drawing. There is no such thing as a draft drawing and a final drawing. There is only one drawing.

edge of the mark

The locked in figure





### **Tracing and re-tracing**

I trace subjects and objects. Not every part of the subject or object, only aspects that interest me. Similar to the way student painters copied the masters' style in the Renaissance to understand the techniques used, I copy aspects of a situation in an attempt to understand it. Tracing is one of my tools to observe and explore.

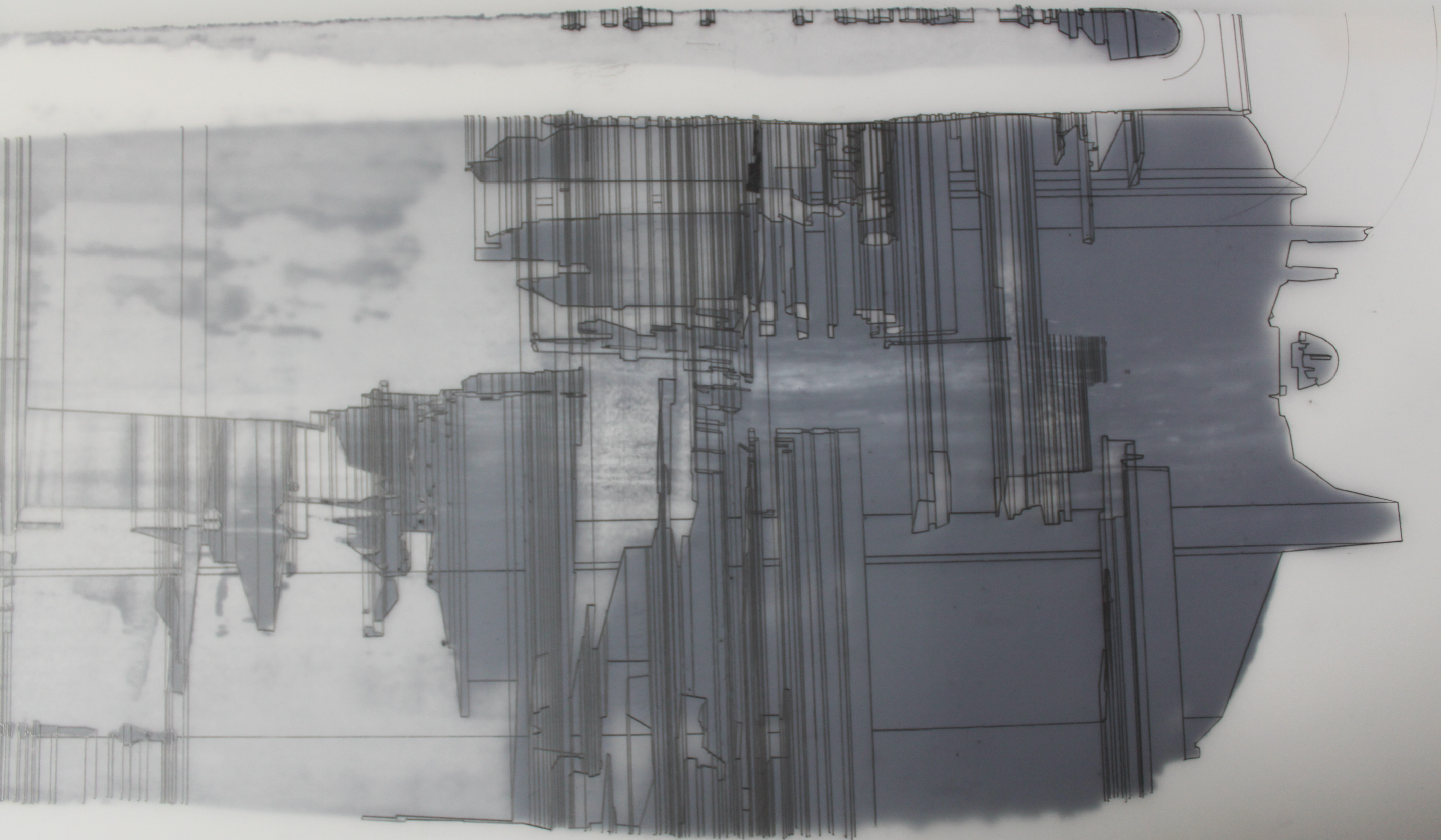
In the screed drawing, there is a relationship between the figure in the middle and the edge of the mark. The vertical rhythm in the mark is due to the variable resistance from the materials, which has a visual effect from the top edge to the bottom edge of the mark. The figure in the middle indicates further detailed evidence of this resistance in a constantly changing form. I start exploring the relationship between the perimeter area of resistance (edges of the mark) and detailed formations.

Every change in direction, form and greyscale indicates the constantly changing resistance when making the drawing. Although it is impossible to retrace the status of each force, it is possible to note the visible changes they have caused.

The drawing articulates those changes by drawing the lines of resistance; lines running perpendicular to the main directional movement. The lines of resistance connect the edge of the mark with the figure in the middle. Although there are variable states of resistances, the position of the resistance lines each indicate that change happened on the paper at the same time.

The lines of resistance articulate the drawing as a time-based movement, which was a key element of the artist's work. These lines form intersections based on the movement of the drawing.









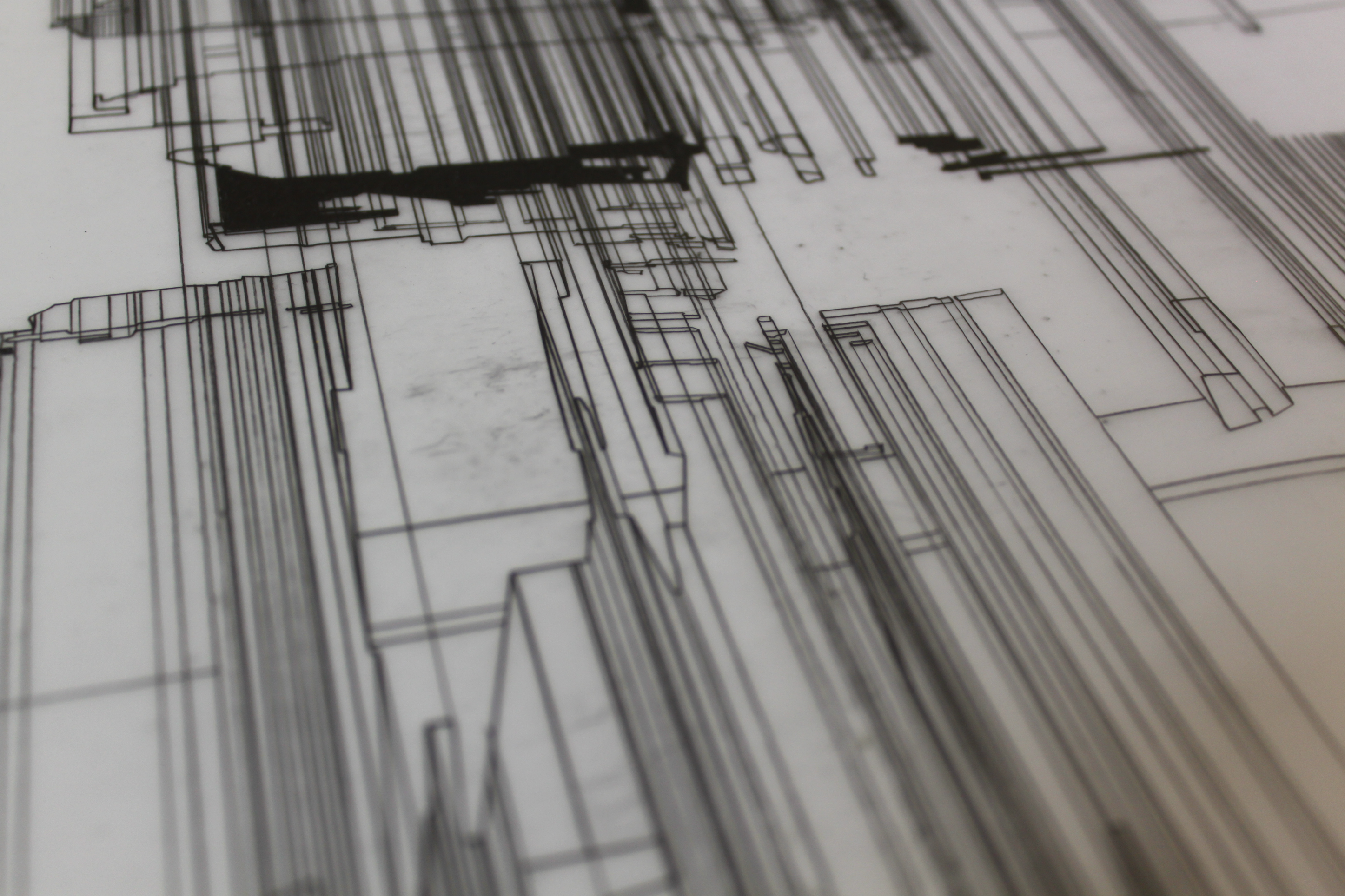
*In this field drawing, field conditions such as identifiable geometries, which are visual texture and medium density dependant, form relationships between detailed marks and the entire mark outline.*

The need to trace the *accurately* given geometries of the situation stems from the need to figure out what it is that I am looking at and to hold on what I know is 'real'. However, I am not speculating on the geometry of this object: its form as it presents itself is not up for interpretation. Tracing the visible geometry of something in a film fragment or photograph that is a representation of the situation becomes like a blind man feeling his way into a discovery of what is in his hands. A difference between the blind man and my tracing is that the result of his *act of design* might be a mental construct, and mine a drawn one.

When I am tracing I am not drawing to confirm what I already know, I am drawing to discover what I don't know. Can I let go of pre-conceived associations and cultural meanings that make a situation familiar? Can I observe the unfamiliar aspects of what is in front of me and bring it in relation with the familiar? What is the relationship between these elements that make the situation an interesting configuration beyond obvious?

Drawing the exact contours of an object through the technique of tracing is a way of collecting information, spending time to accumulate understanding of the subject during the process of tracing.







### Slowness, repetition and iteration

Enlarging the resolution of an image on a drawing board and tracing aspects of it accommodates slowness. Hand drawing in itself is a technique that slows the hand and the mind, allowing time to be consumed by the drawing. The line follows the hand and the hand follows the line. Every line that is drawn deviates the drawing and the mind in an intricate manner.

Perry Kulper speaks of a ‘stretched presence’. These two words speak of duration; a time related enlargement; an enlarged ‘time frame’ that can be stretched open to reveal aspects of its presence. The eye can see specific circumstances in a slow motion replay that are invisible at the speed of real-time.

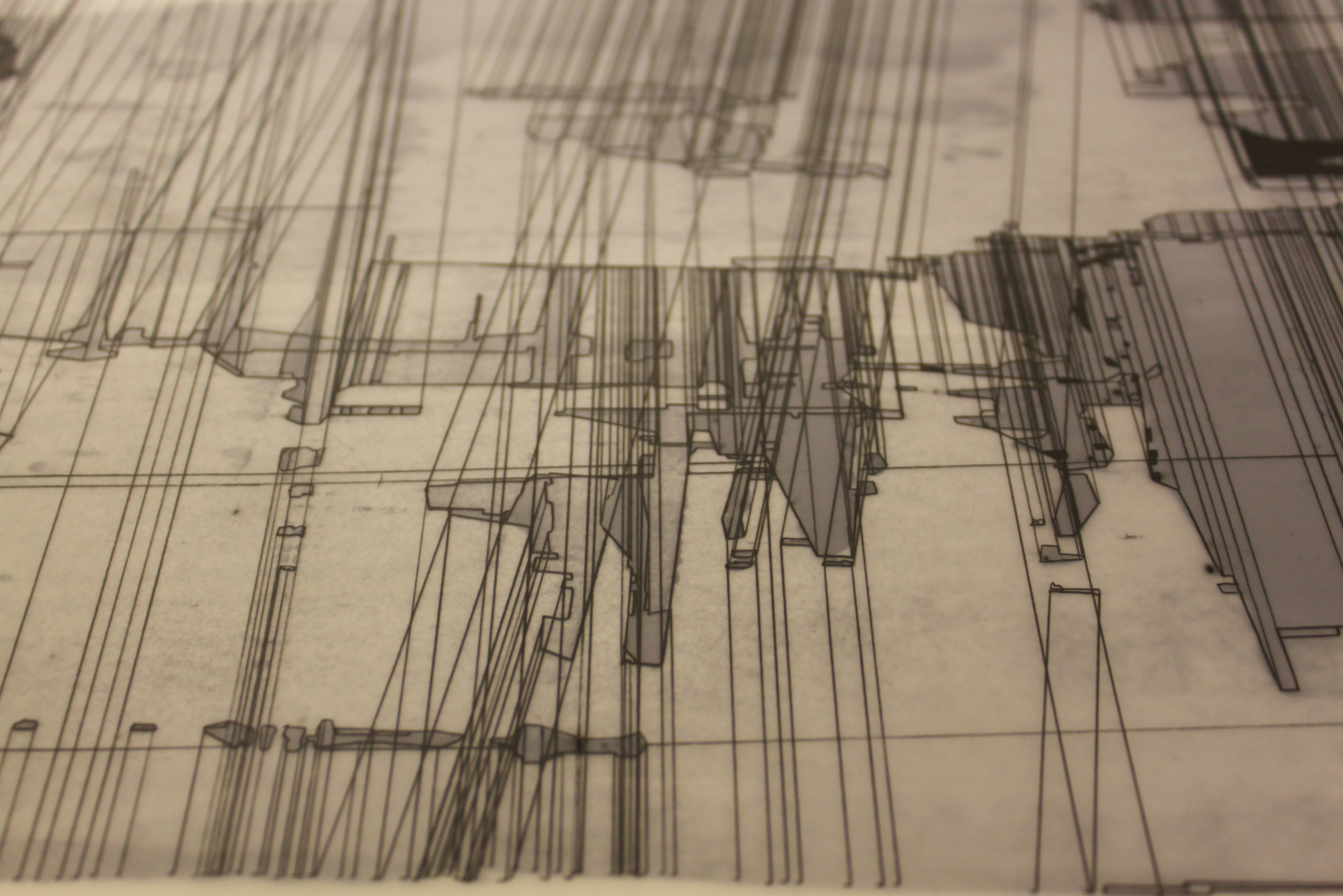
This slowness, or stretched presence, brings to the surface the specificity of what is being made visible: the specificity of the object, -its physicality, its details (presence) and scars (history), its physical relationship with the surroundings.

This slowness reveals the specific circumstances and the complexity of information specificity surrenders.

The process of tracing, drawing and redrawing by hand is a manual process of repetition and iteration. It is a slow process with basic tools. The action as well as the conceptualization process gains a slow but pertinent character. The process is one that alternates between ‘residing in the drawing’ (the non-representational tool and method) and ‘taking a distance’ (conceptualizing, the formulation of propositional knowledge). This oscillation allows for deviation and the possibility to for things to be corrected over time to result in a relevant thinking process.

The information embedded within the thickness of the line is redrawn from a different point of views. Photographing drawings and redrawing them time after time stems from the urge to spend time with the subject, understand the subject and discover its spatial implications. The slow and manual production of drawn iterations resists a singular of point of view in the thinking process. It instead attempts to include the complexity embedded within the specific situation.







### **The Autonomous Drawing**

This field drawing investigates the moments of resistance as it characteristically makes form on the paper. As I tracing the objects and their resistance to the paper, the drawing slowly gains autonomy.

When the last line is drafted, the drawing can be lifted from its mold and the drawing stands on its own. This field drawing has established relationships between its field conditions and has, for now, found a stable disposition.

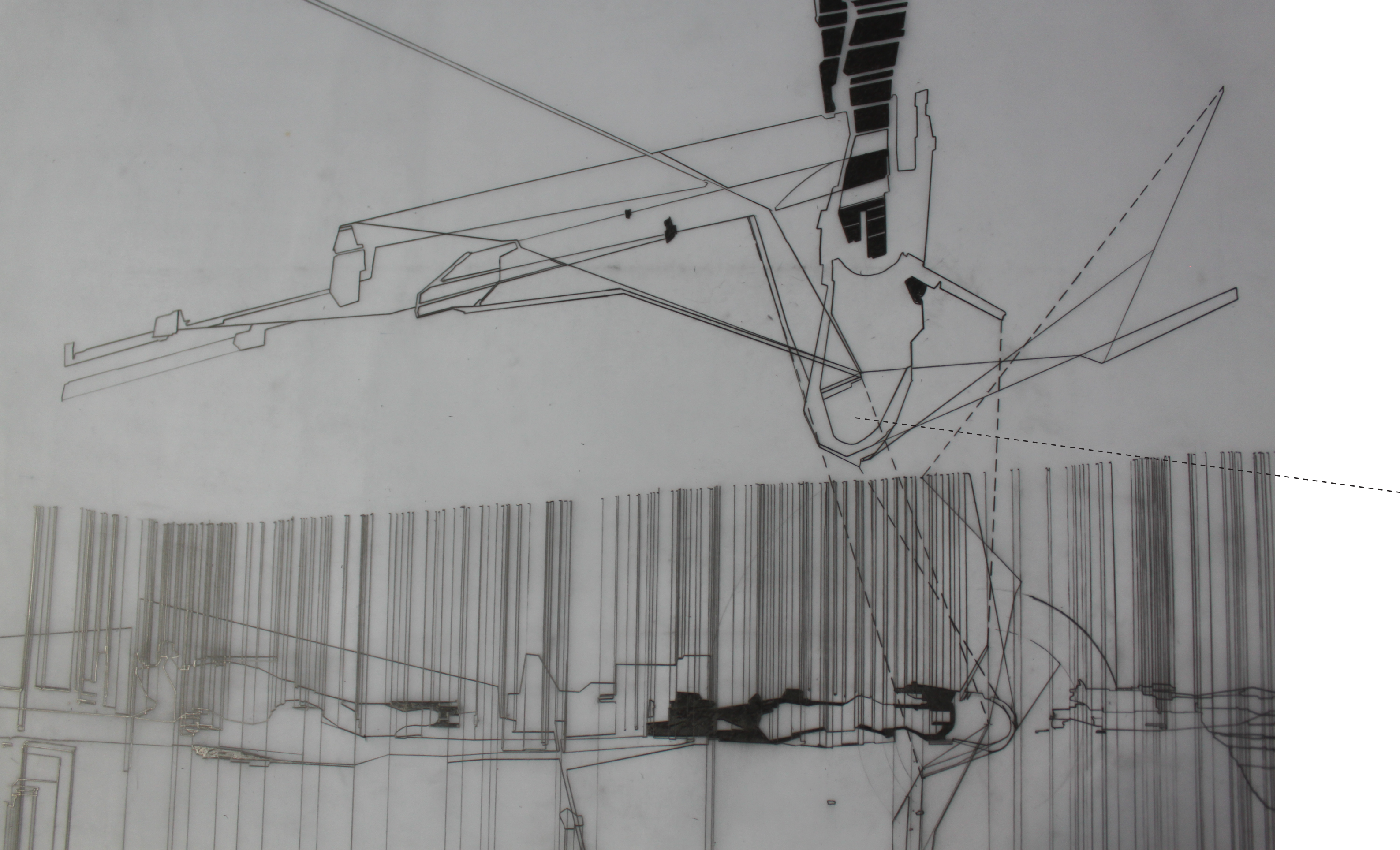
### **Tracing what is Visible, Re-tracing what Defines the Visible.**

Every line traces an object and its stance. Every line that is drawn differentiates the stance of the object and expands on the stance of the subject. I try to surrender and not have a stance in this situation, yet. I try to see the stance in front of me.

The drawing unpacks the subject. The drawing re-packs the object. The drawing re-formats the object: the form was always there, just drawn now, just drawn differently. Some lines are drawn and redrawn, -up to four or five times- and all lines remain relevant. They differentiate the stance of the line.

They make it clear there is no ultimate line; there might not be an ultimate stance.







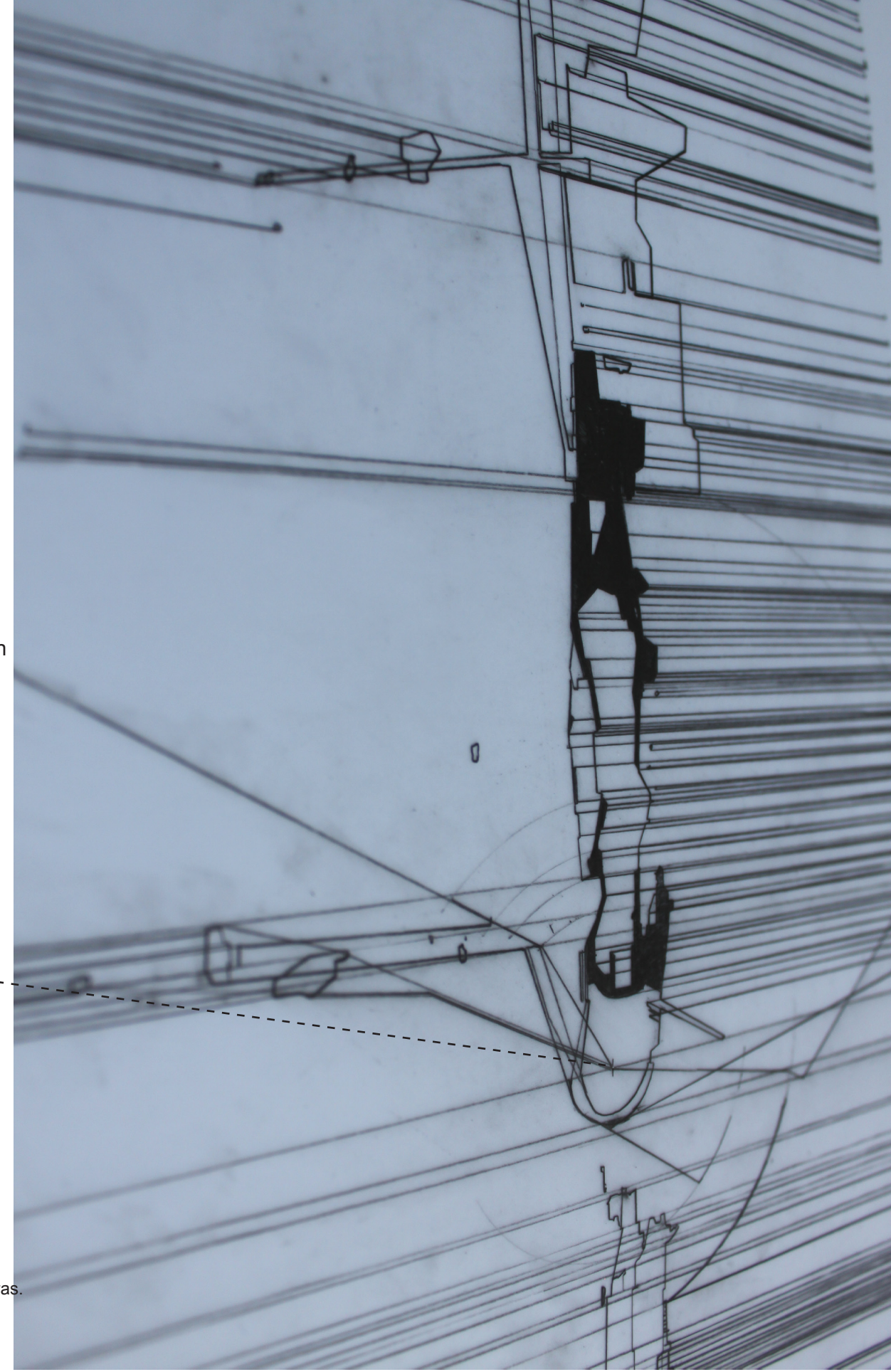
### **In the Depth of the Field**

I decide to probe this new-found resolution for more detail. I photograph a detail, print it out and underlay it above the drawing. I've photographed the detail at an angle to the drawing, to tease out its spatial content.

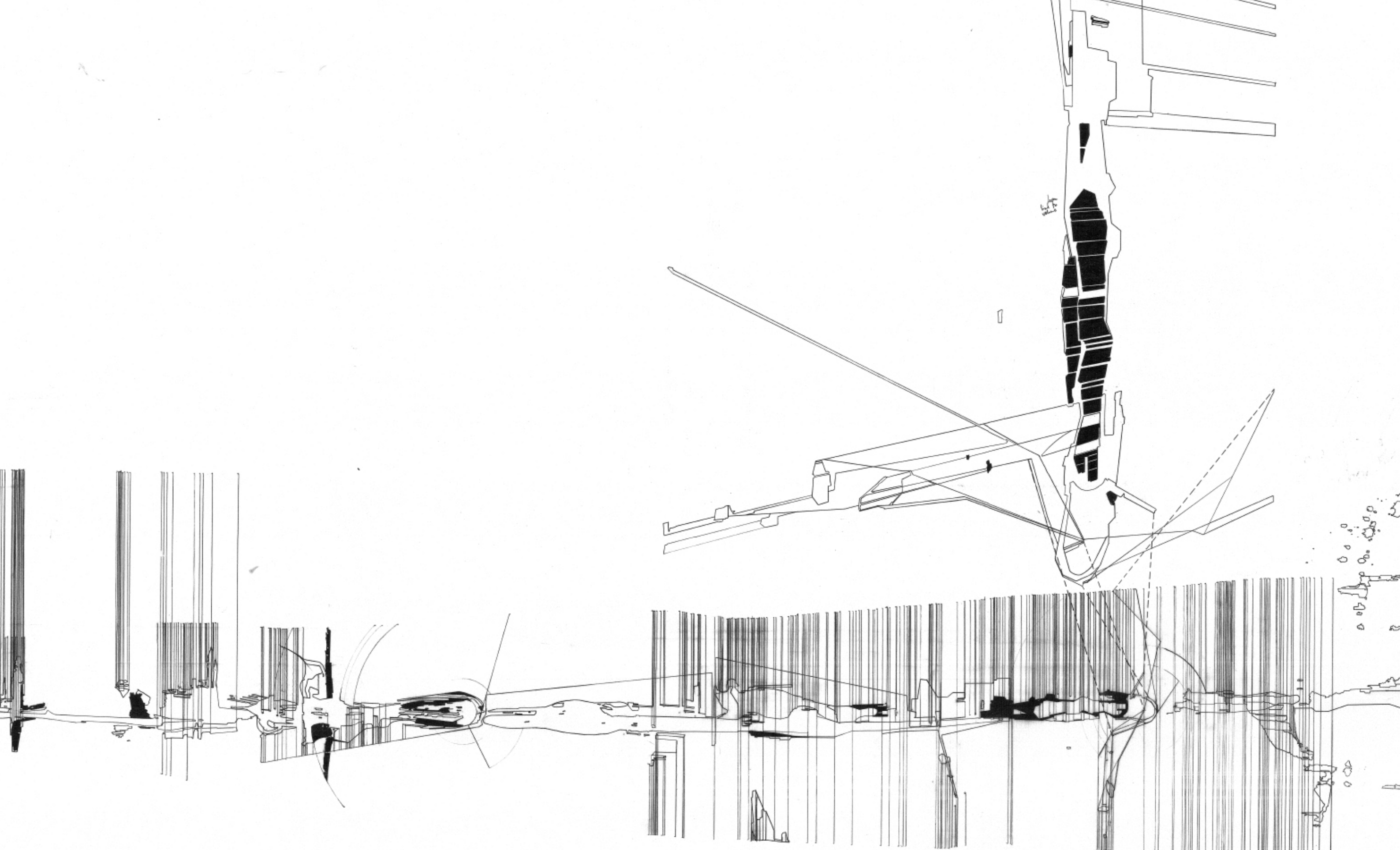
I have rotated the print. By now I am quite familiar with the genesis of the form: you think you know what you see. By rotating the drawing I can look at the detail from a different point of view. I indicate the position of the detail and how it has been rotated by dashed lines.

The drawing develops a new presence.

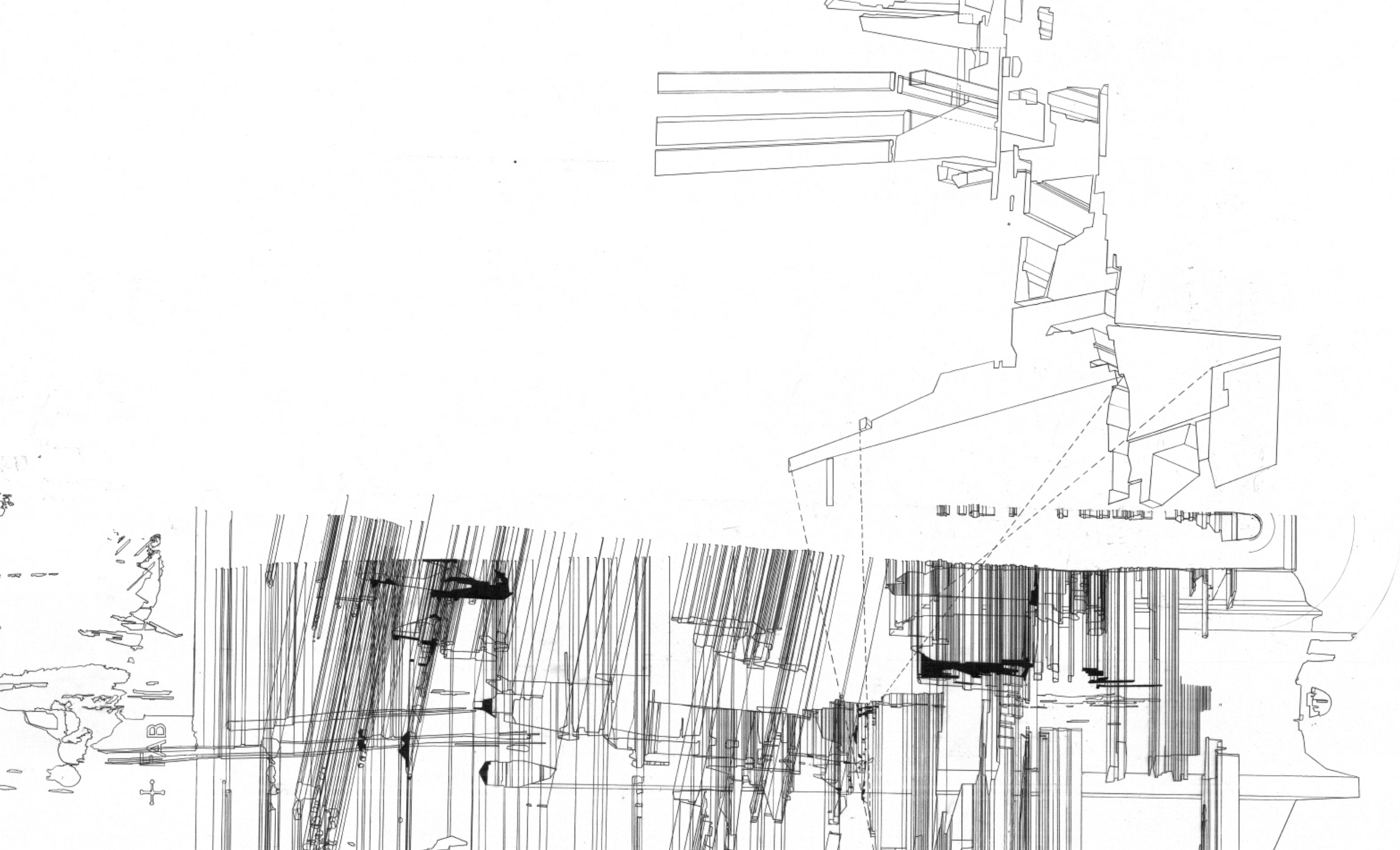
I make annotations such as rotational axis and transfer lines, even numbering the subsequent steps that I take, as one tends to forget later on what the specific procedure was.



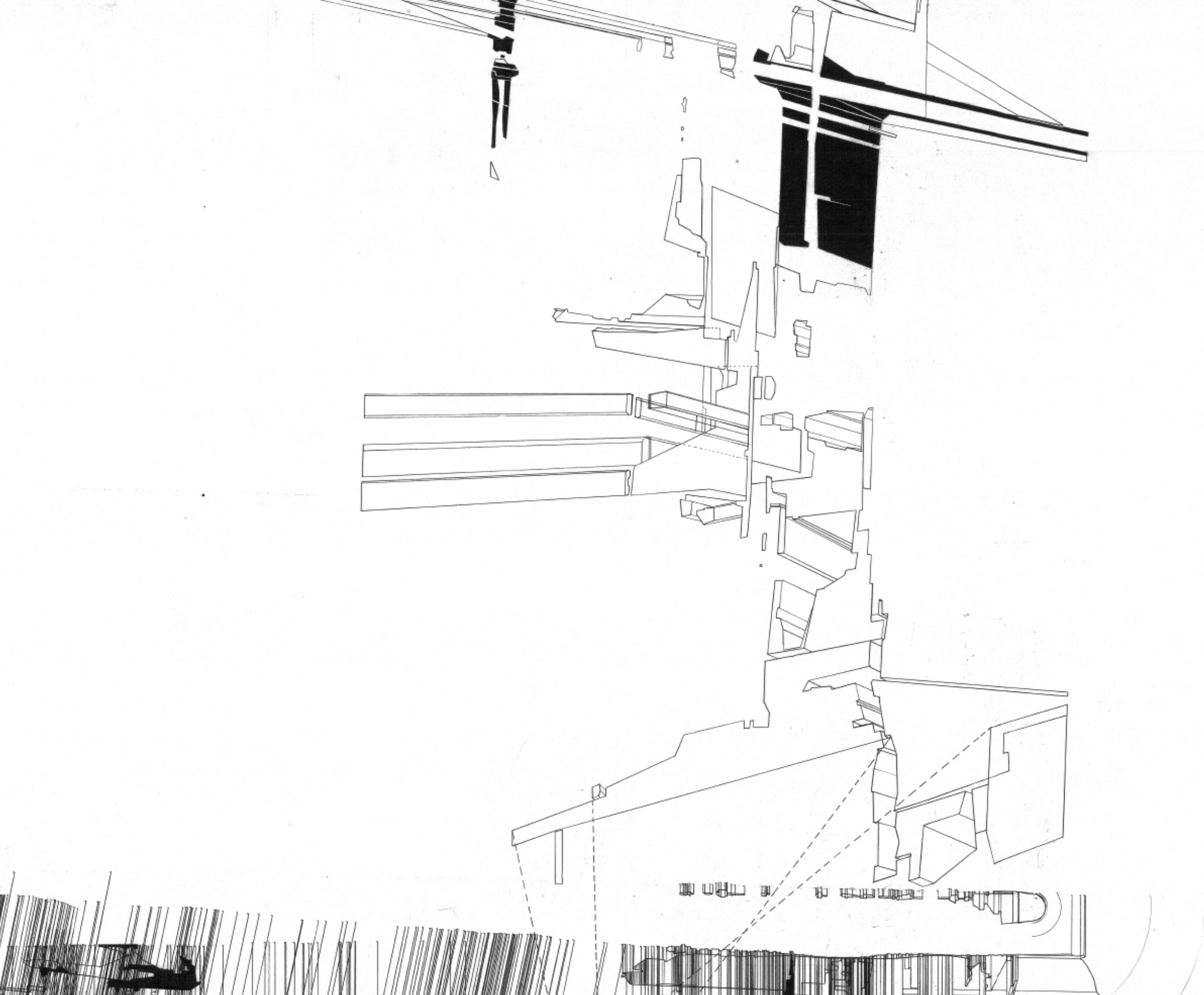














The fragments of spatial content produced by these drawing projects are autonomous of nature and belong to the space of the drawing.

**Drawing Research from One Drawing to the Other**

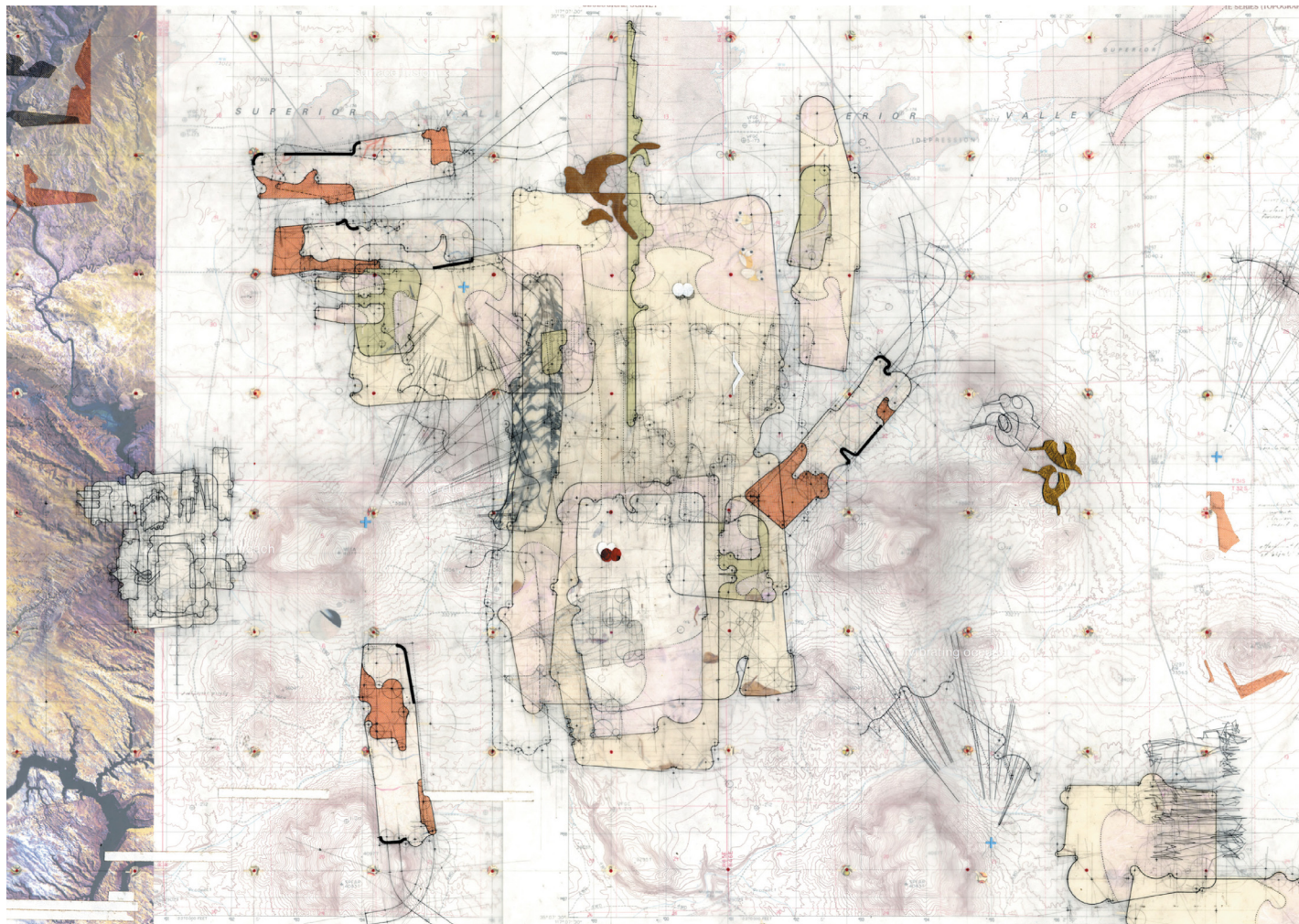
I assess the quality of the drawing by the amount of latent resolution it holds, outlining the capability of the result to be speculated on in subsequent drawing projects.

**Stepping in and out of the drawing**

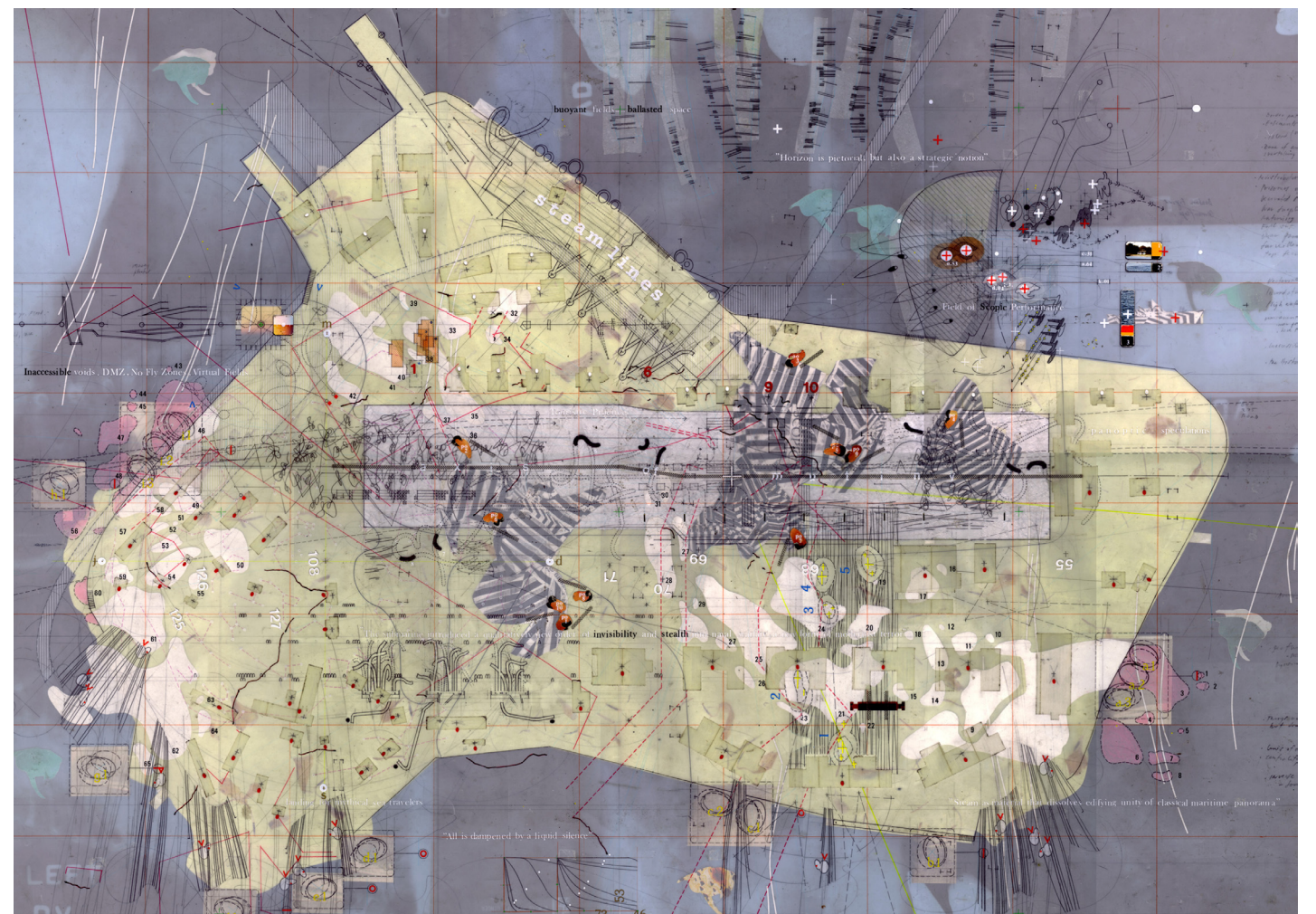
I strongly belief in the process of alternating between momentary residing up close in a process of production (observation through drawing) and consciously stepping out of that process to assess the produced as a whole. (Taking a distance; the distance between you and the drawing is of such 'measurement' that you can observe the newly produced whole: the field drawing.)

Stepping in and out of the drawing brings the gained understanding in a discourse. A discourse that brings the gained understanding in relation to what one knows. The embedded discourse positions the drawing in the research context.





'Fast Twitch' Desert House; Perry Kulper, 2004



Perry Kulper, Davids Island Ideas competition



I'd like exemplify The complexity of the specific with the work of Smout Allen and Perry Kulper. I feel their work evidences an 'enainment' with the specific nature of a project site, each in a very different way I can relate to.

Mark Smout and Laura Allen make incredible drawings and models expressing the nature of their projects. Their drawings are drawn with transparency: they collapse the space between spatial object and drawing space. The drawings confront outlines of object and drawn space arguably with an aim to establish a relationship between them. It also implies that the 'hierarchy' of space – what is in the drawing foreground or background – is not object directed. Instead, all elements are important and drawn in full. Although the drawings are recognizable as a plan, section or perspective in an architectural sense, the drawings perform beyond their representational territory; they are allowed to express something particular that relates to Smout and Allen's concerns in the project.

The drawings for 'Architecture for a Restless Landscape' are as nervous as the retreating landscape itself, the nature of the drawings and models seems to ground itself in their observations of the physicality of the receding cliffs. Their drawings reside somewhere between place-grounded speculative diagrams and architectural orthographic representations. That in-between space is where they seem to operate and develop mechanisms for project specific interests. The subjects discussed through the outputs of their projects are very much grounded in the site and their environmental circumstance. This is expressed to the degree that most of their drawings and models start to resemble the idea as they let the material respond. In the case of this project, a restless landscape or as Alexander Trevi puts it: 'No solid Ground but the unceasing performance of slow disaster.' [01]

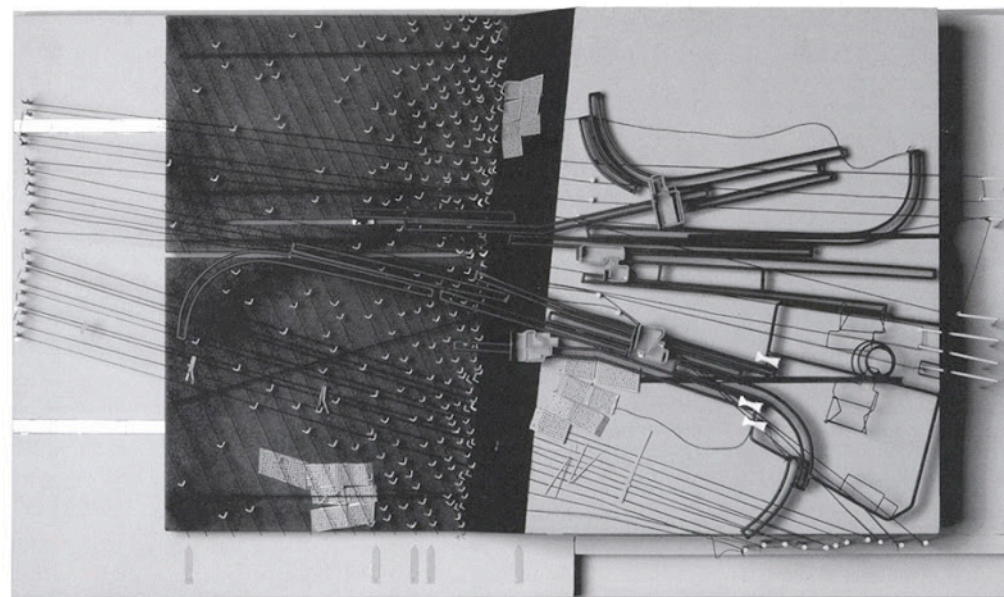
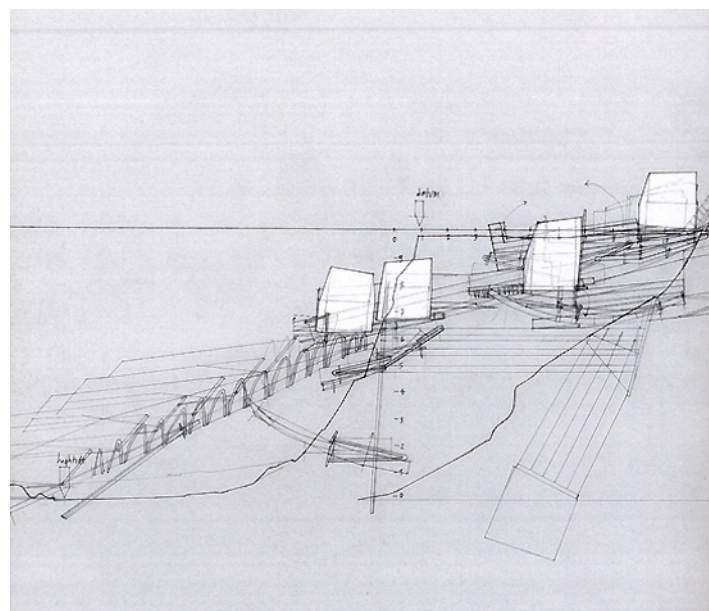
This is arguably due to a profound understanding of the processes present in the retreating land, but more importantly, an in depth tacit understanding of the specific *nature* of the site.

[01] <http://pruned.blogspot.be/2007/09/retreating-village.html>, Alexander Trevi

To my mind, Kulper's drawings are field drawings in my mind, that collect observations in different scales and natures. He lets them collide and compose on the paper.

As I understand it, he describes the drawings as architectural representations of his observations. The important aspect of his representations is that they do not enforce a reduction of thought. In fact, the drawings contain complex internal relationships established between the collected and articulated elements. The drawings are beautifully crafted, but more importantly, they are a tool for Kulper to further his spatial practice and response to the world he observes around him.

Although Kulpers drawings look very different, I feel my drawings relate to them in their search for answers beyond the representational with conscious effort to maintain the complexity of what is present in the observation.



Smout Allen, *Architecture for a Restless Landscape*, drawing 'Houses on the move', model 'Trajectories and tracing of former settlements',



From **site** to **situation**  
Further to the **circumstance of the situation**  
to then **look at a circumstance from a specific point of view**



Introduction to Part 3 : Circumstantial Explorations

“Only the individual can discover one’s own position in this physical and conceptual environment. One’s perception is that of an open continuous set of events, of situations.” [01]

In a creative process, perception has a fundamental, active role throughout, in the alternating process of understanding on the one hand and working with the understood on the other.

What there is to see, needs to be activated by the viewer, activated in a process of understanding the resolution of the information served by a situation.

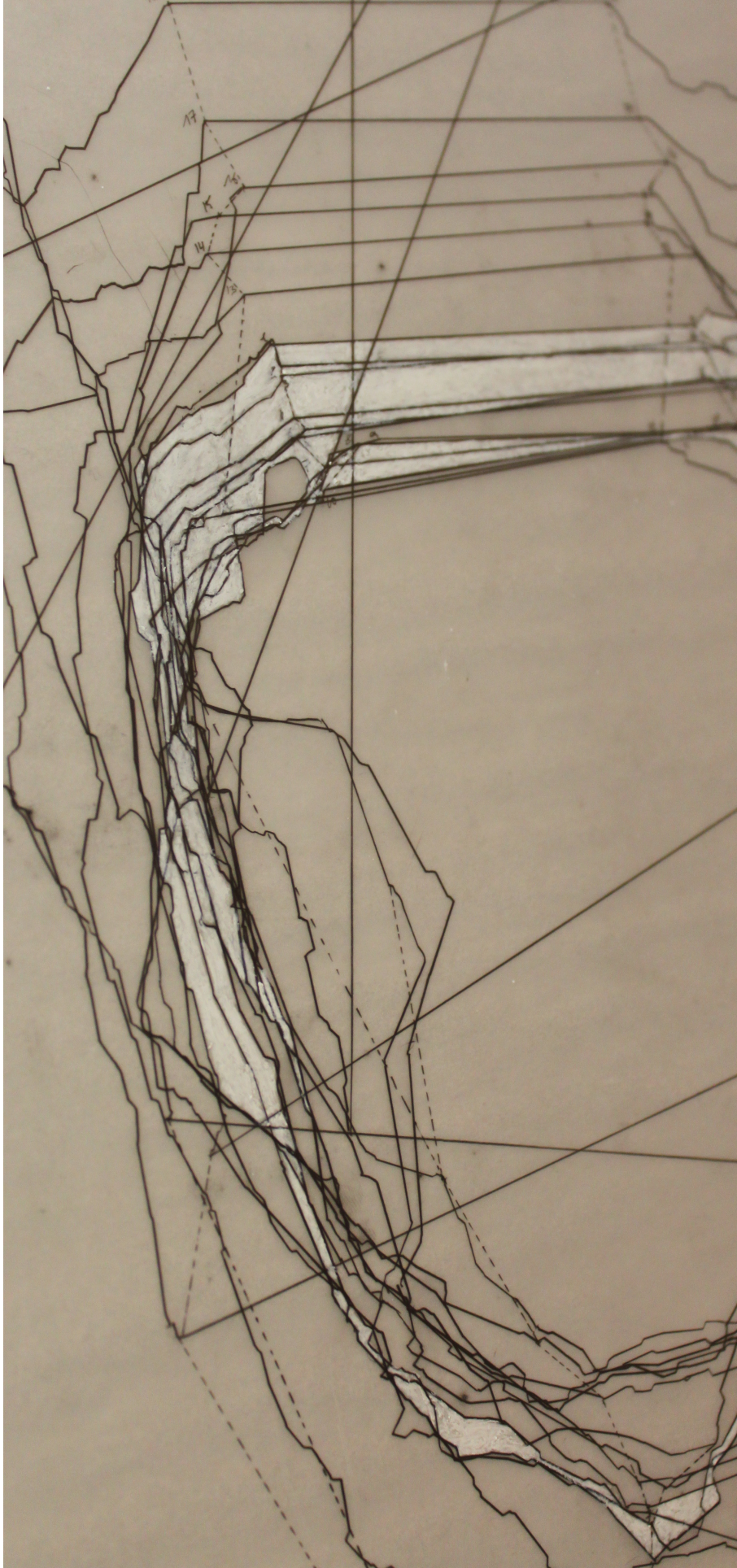
In this thesis, the enduring interest in the perception of space, its representation and the drawing research that drives the understanding between perception and representation, originates from an obsession with understanding the complexity embedded in experienced environments – or, perceived space.

The Depth of the Field

Chapter 2, *The Complexity of the Specific*, outlined the tools used for steering the content of observed situations away from the categorical mind towards specific and the reasons why. In chapter 3, I engage with the depth and nature of the found complexity from a specific point of view.

[01] See Frederic Levrat's essay, ‘Intentions Matter’ in *MEMORY GAMES* (1995), a book that accompanied the drawings by Peter Eisenman of his Center for the Arts, Emory University.







### Drawing on Circumstances

Here, it is helpful to expand on the word ‘situation’ with the additional ‘circumstance’: ‘The circumstance of the situation’. ‘Circumstance’ points at the specificity of the situation and unforeseen manner in which a situation is formed under the performance of conditions.

The place of investigation (the site) is referred to as *the situation* due to the active and dynamic role of the site or field conditions in an ever changing configuration and disposition. Renaming 'site' as 'situation' attempts to steer away from describing generalised or abstracted conditions of the field in favour of describing the complexity of a specific situation. This complexity is drawn out of what is seen in the circumstantial elements of a situation.

### Point of View

The situation of the project ‘*Drawing Out Collapse*’ is based on is the demolition of the architrave of a building with a specific history. One of the circumstantial elements in this project is the point of view from which this situation is looked at. The point of view from which the drawing is drawn, defines what the form is of the drawn objects. If the camera had recorded the event from another side, the objects would have had different outlines though the situation was the same. This slightly altered view could be viewed as a different iteration of the current view of the object. The difference is in the point of view, which forces one to look at a situation differently. This subsequently presents a different set of specific conditions, triggering different drawing and thinking processes.

Aspects of the drawing project investigate this relationship between the way that specific content is observed and registered. This also implies that although there are methods used to find entry points into the specific content (tools to augment observation), every project develops in a different way.

The process and procedures developed for each project are of more importance than the final drawn outcome. Understanding the steps made in an investigation, allows one to continue with insight and this is one of the important accomplishments of this PhD study. The critical examination of my practice of observation through drawing has not only laid bare the depth of these field drawings, it has also focused my practice on the processes used and the specific content produced.



The circumstance of the situation points at the specific, 'circumstantial' detail of the situation, a step even further away from categorization.

For the sake of clarity, we may compare a situation as it unfolds to a film that is running at 24 frames per second. Every frame holds circumstantial information that leads to other circumstantial events and contributes to what we consider the 'main' event of the situation. Every frame has specific content pertaining to the build-up of the situation. One frame on its own might be considered as an iteration of the other, but the specific disposition of all elements in one specific frame has a role in how the situation unfolds. In this context, looking at a frozen moment, it is irrelevant to think about what is shown in general terms, only the specifics of what is visible are important.

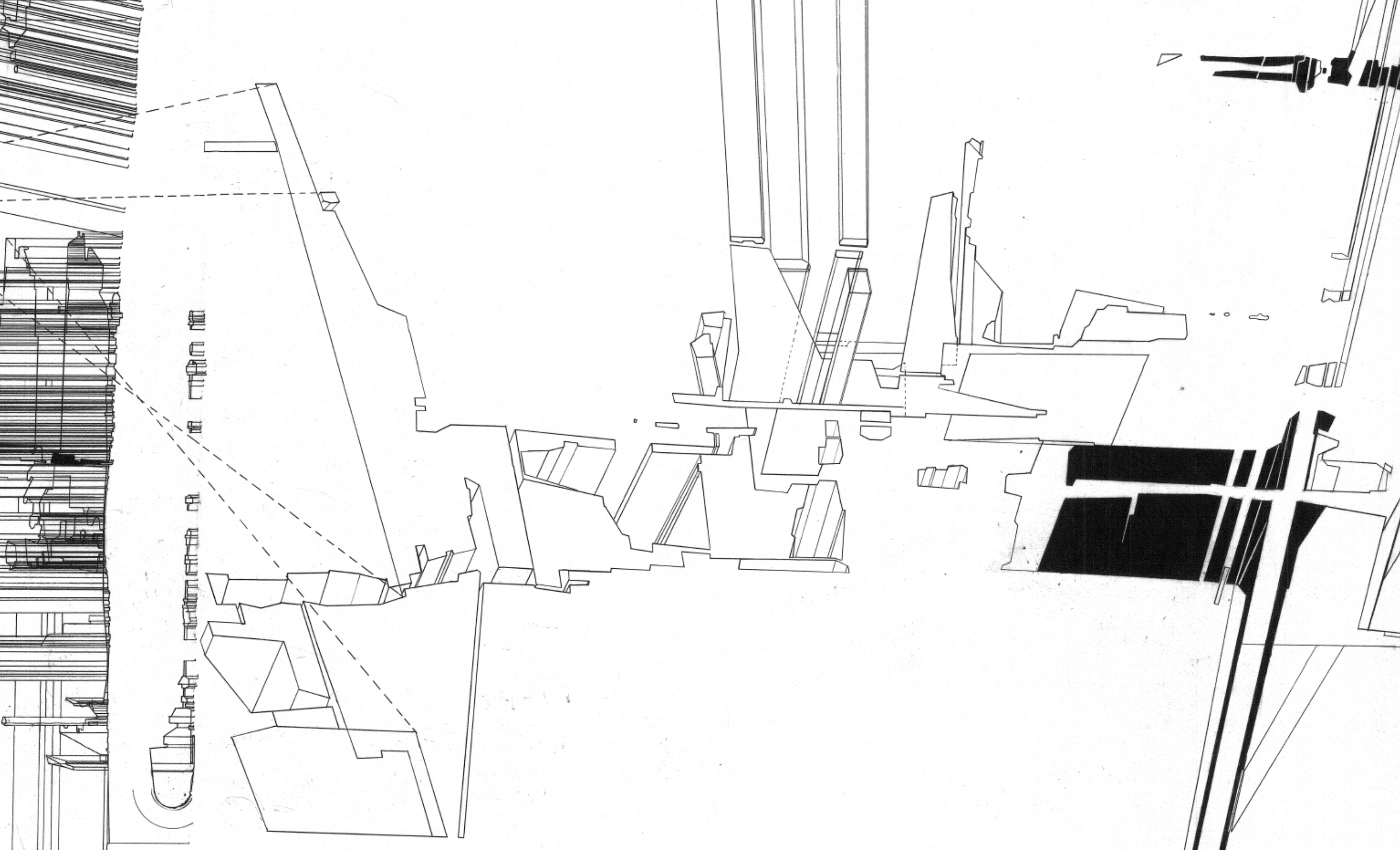
Any still representation (or film frame) of a situation is a frozen moment: it is the arrested moment we are confronted with at that particular time of study.

The field conditions that are articulated in a study are embedded in the circumstance of the situation. Whether the particular circumstance is considered to be of primary significance to the 'whole' picture (over time) or not, is of no concern. What is important is the fact that it is present, noted and observed in its circumstantial role.

I am interested in the circumstantial nature of a situation: the complex circumstances that determine unfolding events. This interest resides in my research without denying the importance of the opposite: a summative abstracted (and extracted) understanding of the whole.



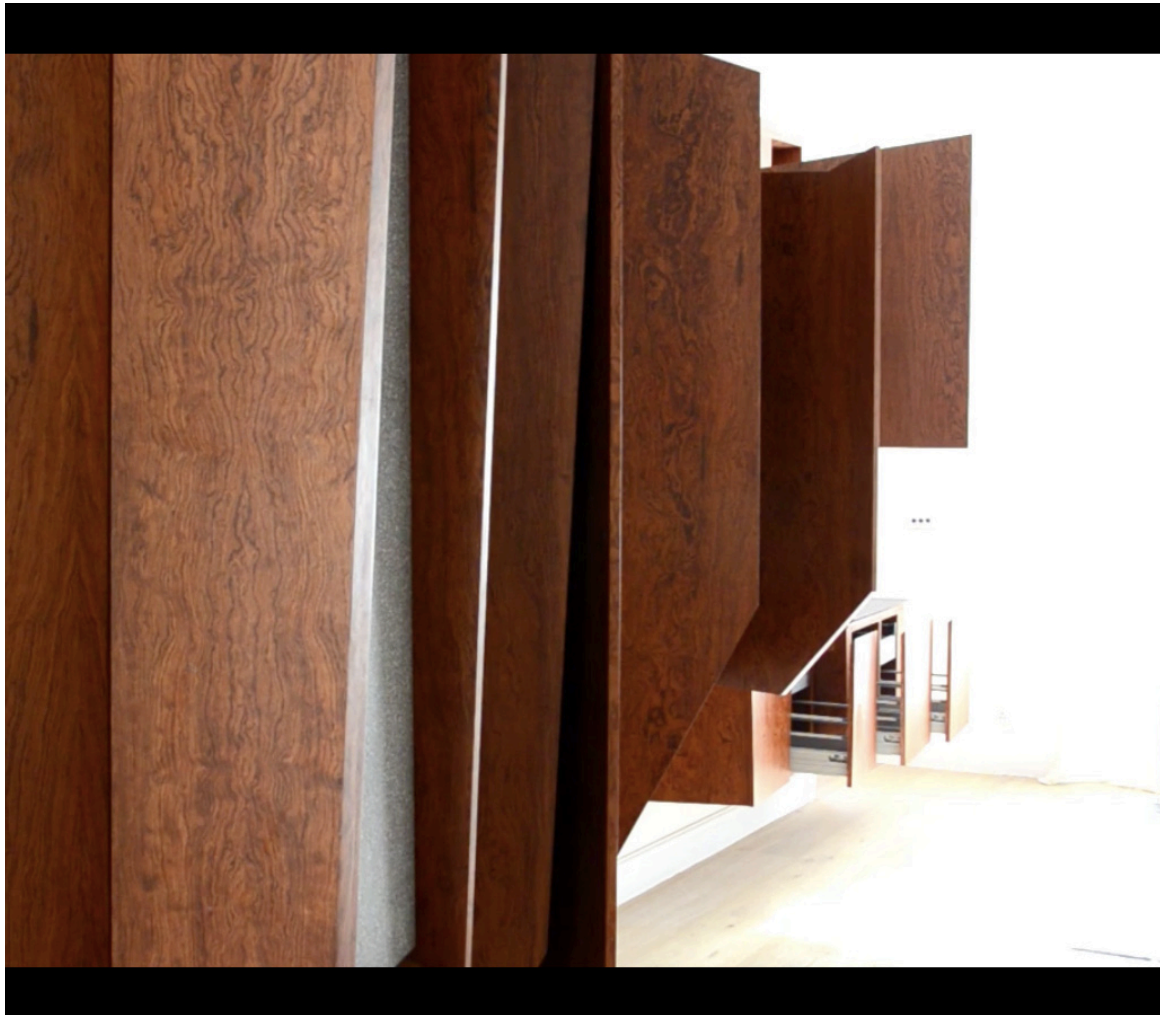












The following project carries evidential and beneficial elements of the re-research implemented in the traditional field of architecture. It outlines detailed design outcomes that are based on specific circumstances. Furthermore, the resolution of its built form is explored in consecutive projects, which uncover a better understanding of the term *point of view*.

### **Super-Furniture**

62 Stanhope Gardens is a refurbishment project in London (work by *Architecture Project (London)*). The 180 sqm flat is located at the three top floors of a Victorian terrace house in a traditional London square in West London overlooking a central communal garden. We restored the interior of the house in the former grand Victorian setting in neutral white, a blank frivolous decorated canvas, ready to receive a contemporary program.

The lower floor contains living quarters with a living room, dining and kitchen area. We compressed all functions into 'super-furniture': a form and volume that sits at the periphery of the restored Victorian space.

The programmed volume is made of Kevazinga timber veneer and Porfido natural stone and changes form and disposition as it responds to the particular space it serves.





Designed as one continuous element, the super-furniture presents itself in some places as an object in the space.

Photo by Sakiko Kohashi





In other spaces the super-furniture takes on the scale of the room in search of a relationship with the ceiling and floor.

Photo by Sakiko Kohashi

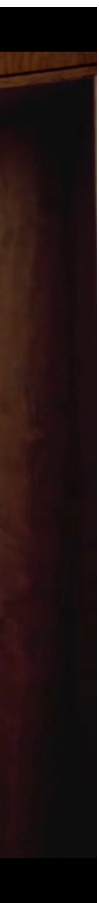




Sometimes the cupboard becomes the room



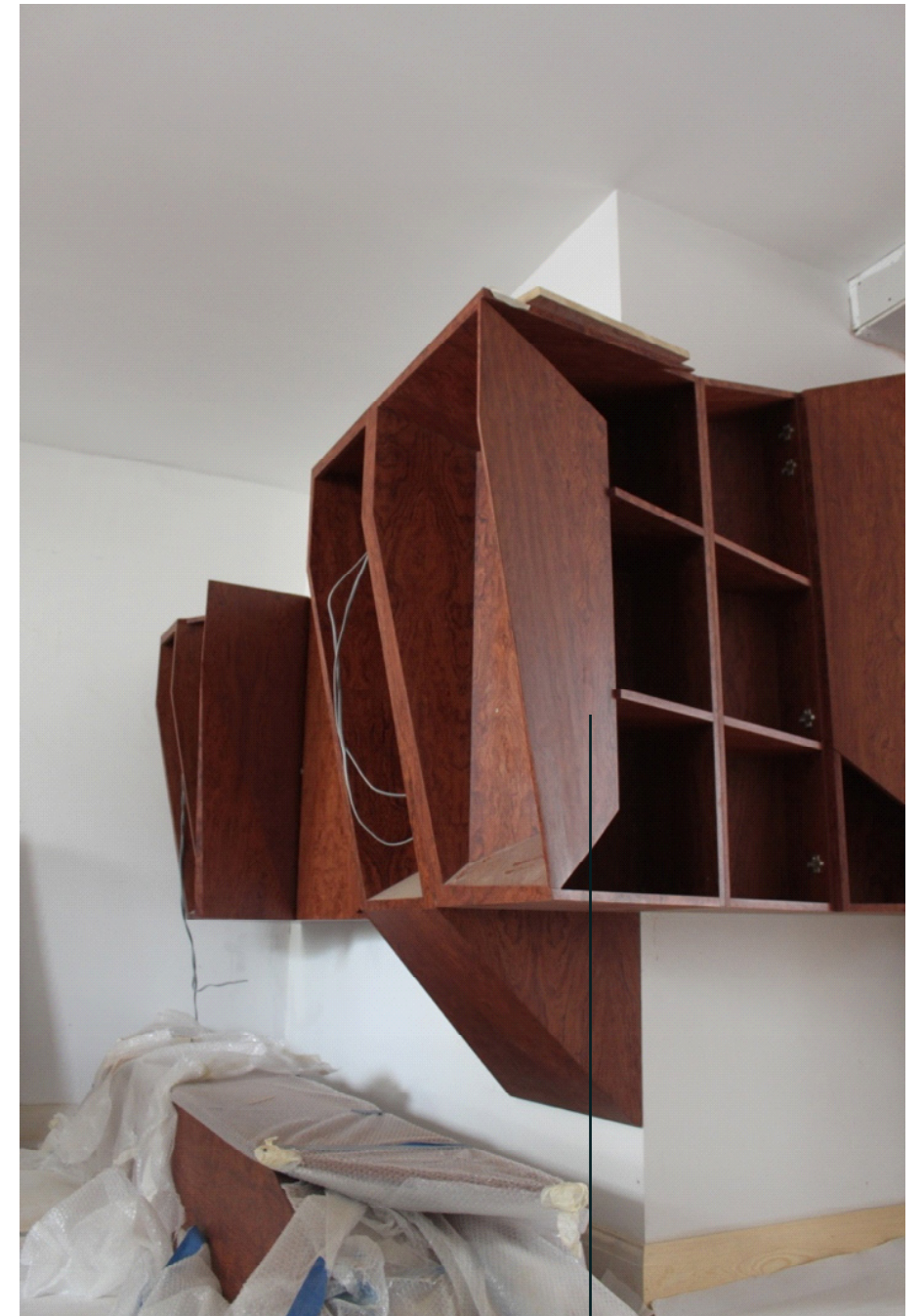




Stepping out of the cupboard: one enters the apartment through the cupboard.  
Photo by Sakiko Kohashi







Similar to the way speakers are directed to enable sound to be heard better, the articulated volumes direct themselves in the room. The direction is further specified in the interior of these volumes, increasing the 'perspectival' take of the volume onto the space. These three-dimensional 'cones' leave no doubt about how the volume is addressing the room. Key volumes are inlaid with Porfido stone, that are not seen in this construction photograph.





### Interior Performance Structure

This cupboard is a structure that performs in the room; an interior performance structure. Not only literally with openable partitions, doors and 'gates' that are sized as to have a presence in the room, but every redirection of the volume establishes a connection with its context and influences the way one starts organising the space around it.

The embedded resolution is what I am in search of through every phase of a project. Here, this is found in the relationship between the object of design and its immediate context of specific location and program.

Every location in the respective rooms (living dining kitchen entrance hall and wc) are specific site locations addressed differently as their conditions redirect the material of the volume.

Although the whole volume is connected and has a formal continuity, every inch of this volume is part of a response to the room location it is present at.

The volume expresses the search for specificity of context in the programmed interior of this Victorian house.

The search resulted in a programmed sculptural volume, manifesting itself differently from every point of view.

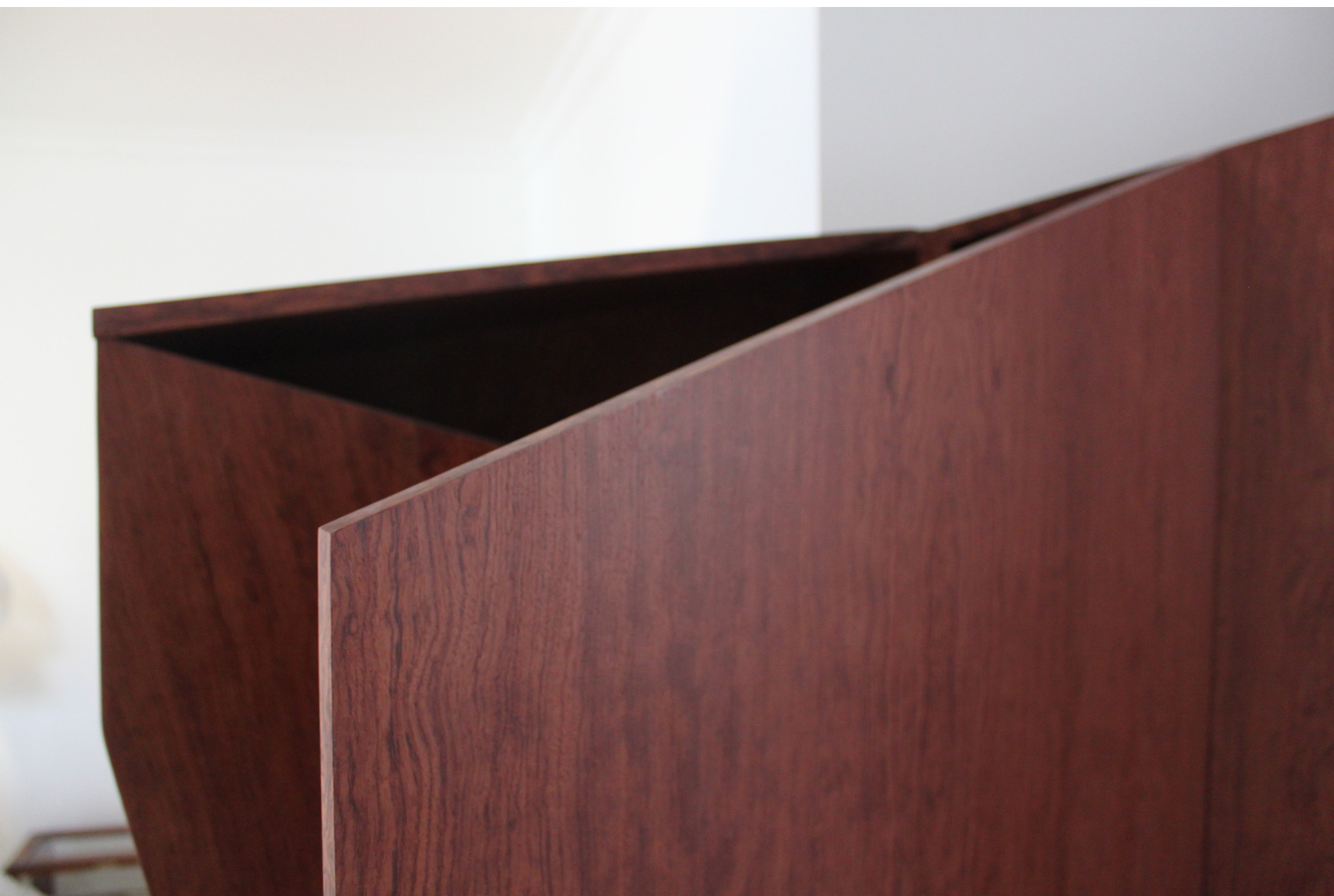






There are no handles to any of the doors, the timber and the Porfido stone are chamfered to enable a grip to open cupboard doors. It details a way for one material to receive the other, giving a literal depth at the edge of the volume.





Some doors stop short to allow the thickness of the door to be grabbed.

Stopping cupboard doors short engages the interior of the cupboard into participating in the space it is addressing. Moreover, the doors are pushed into the carcass of the cupboard; the carcass is cut to receive the exact form of each door.

This detail allows not only engagement between the interior of the cupboard and the space, but also with the carcass that structures the volume.



The carcass is in a formal position to receive the doors as they open and close.





The continuity of the voids in the cupboard become a structural element that articulate the cupboards disposition.





In the dining area, the volume goes in search of a relationship or tension with the ceiling and the ground. The detail of the ceiling mouldings is squeezed between the ceiling and the oppressive furniture as it attempts to take a position. In fact, it never really touches the ceiling.







In the kitchen, the cupboard is cracked open to reveal the natural rough texture and purple colour of Porfido stone, which is quarried near Rome. The volume is shaped to address the different positions one can take in and is operable from all sides.









### Craft

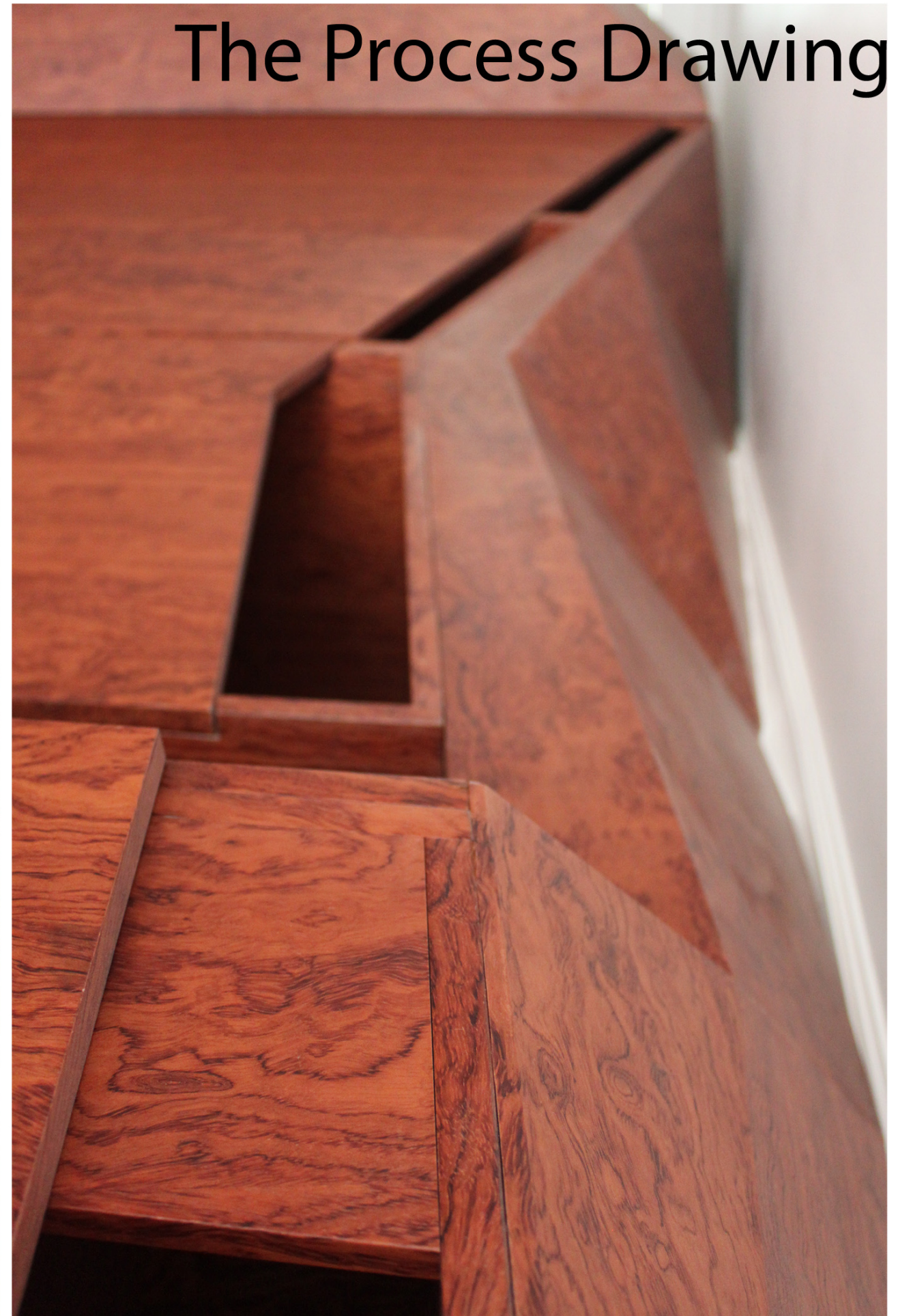
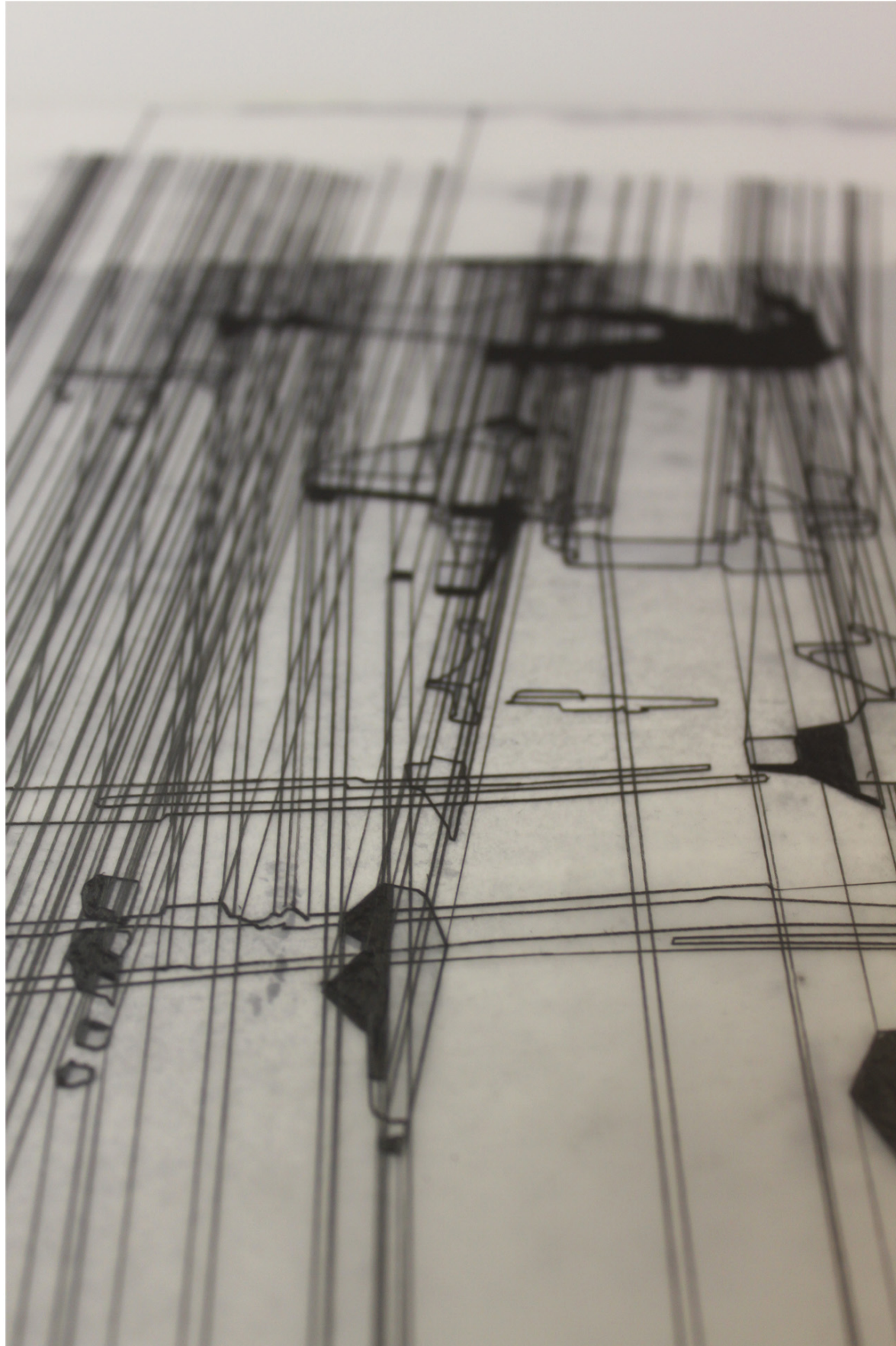
More than 50 detailed construction drawings were necessary to communicate the complexity of this volume. The collaborative nature of the production process becomes important here. Conversations with the carpenter about the drawings attempted to resolve the manufacturing of the form. Construction drawings and models made in the office are studied with the carpenters own expertise, and we received redrawn annotated drawings back from them. Mis-interpretations and impossibilities became opportunities for more detailed responses articulated in the form. At that point, the carpenter becomes a firm part of the contextual responds of the cupboard. He became a partner in this dialogical practice of exchange contributing to the quality of the produced.



In a time where for efficiency reasons and the need for precise translation of our ideas, we want 3D printing to take over a production process directly from the office 3D model, to come closer to an exact copy of the designed object (ex-act, taking the act out of the process). However, the Stanhope project has benefited from the time that was spend by and the influence other experts (such as the carpenters) have had on retrieving this embedded resolution. A mistake made by the carpenter with one of the doors resulted in a reforming of that particular area. Mistakes are interesting moments where time can be spend considering this new situation that presents itself. On-site mistakes are even more interesting as it occurs in 1 to 1: there is no representation that stands in-between you and the edifice.

I find spatial quality (benefiting the experience of the observer (user)) to arise from design intend that articulates observed aspects of the specific circumstances.





# The Process Drawing



The Stanhope project has been pivotal in my search for understanding the link between the research done through drawings and the built work. It took time to establish a relationship between the two as I began to see two modes of practice - drawn practice and built practice - grow their separate ways. Just as I verbalised the separation between the two, and experienced the turmoil that came with it, I started seeing how the two practices are actually one and the same, but in a different realisation and testing ground. This event coincided with one of the PRS PhD progress presentations in Ghent.

Build work is slow and difficult sometimes due to the external parameters influencing the process. This was a process I used to enjoy as Design Director for Ken Yeang in Malaysia and later in London. At that time, finding ways to survive working in commercial driven projects and their particular circumstances became the subject of a master degree, completed in 2009 with supervision from Leon van Schaik. Most of my architectural work experience relates to large-scale developments in international locations. There is a notable and productive character to the violent speed and drastic nature of working in such commercial environments. The process of the PhD gave me time and allowed knowledge and interests I have generated in the previous 15 years to settle and clarify. The PhD reflection positions this knowledge in such a way that I can now use the produced knowledge with more consciousness.

Completing the doctorate has allowed me to take my drawing practice to a level where the link between the drawings and the build work could be made. It enabled me to drastically develop the practice, but also enabled me to talk about built work via the drawing research.

***I speak about what I know; I draw what I cannot speak about just yet.***

There remains a tangible vacuum between some aspects of the research and the ability to communicate it all in words.

There are elements in the drawing research that belong to the space of the drawing, as there are specific elements in the build environment that belong to the space between you and the edifice (the experiential space).





*Stills from film footage by Sakiko Kohashi. The footage is made to be used as base material for drawings, not as a product itself.*



March 2013.

Once the project was finished I invited the Japanese photographer, anthropologist and architect, Sakiko Kohashi, on-site to discuss the cupboard and its performance in the space. Sakiko's photographic interest lies in how space is occupied: her photos of pristine architecture are cluttered with evidence of human occupation that allows observation of lingering tension between planned and unplanned inhabitation.

I want to draw the relationship between the observer and the observed. I want to draw myself closer to an understanding of this shifting 'point of view' and the relationship with the social space that Henry Lefebvre speaks of. What I am observing does not exist within the object I am looking at, and it does not exist in me - it exists in the performative space between me and the object. That is the space I am in search of. The existence of this space is subject to experience. Maybe if I can draw this performative space, it would bring me a step closer to an understanding: I speak about what I know; I draw what I cannot speak about just yet.

Stanhope Gardens had just been handed over to the client, a developer. Nobody lived in the space, nobody really used the space, the space exists in a vacuum, this place is waiting. We went on site and filmed ourselves handling the cupboard and discussing the space from different point of views. We talked about spatial performative elements that related to establishing a relation between observer and the observed. For example, we looked at ways to use the volume, residing in the cupboard, the relationship between plan and perspective, shifting points of view in the spatial experience as one approaches the 'super-furniture' volume and so on.

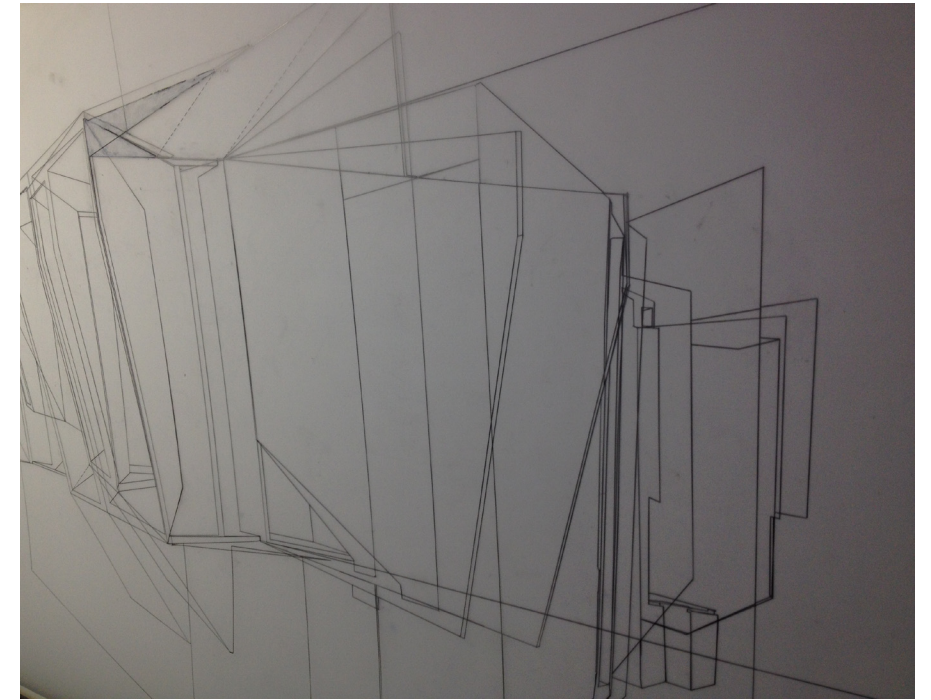
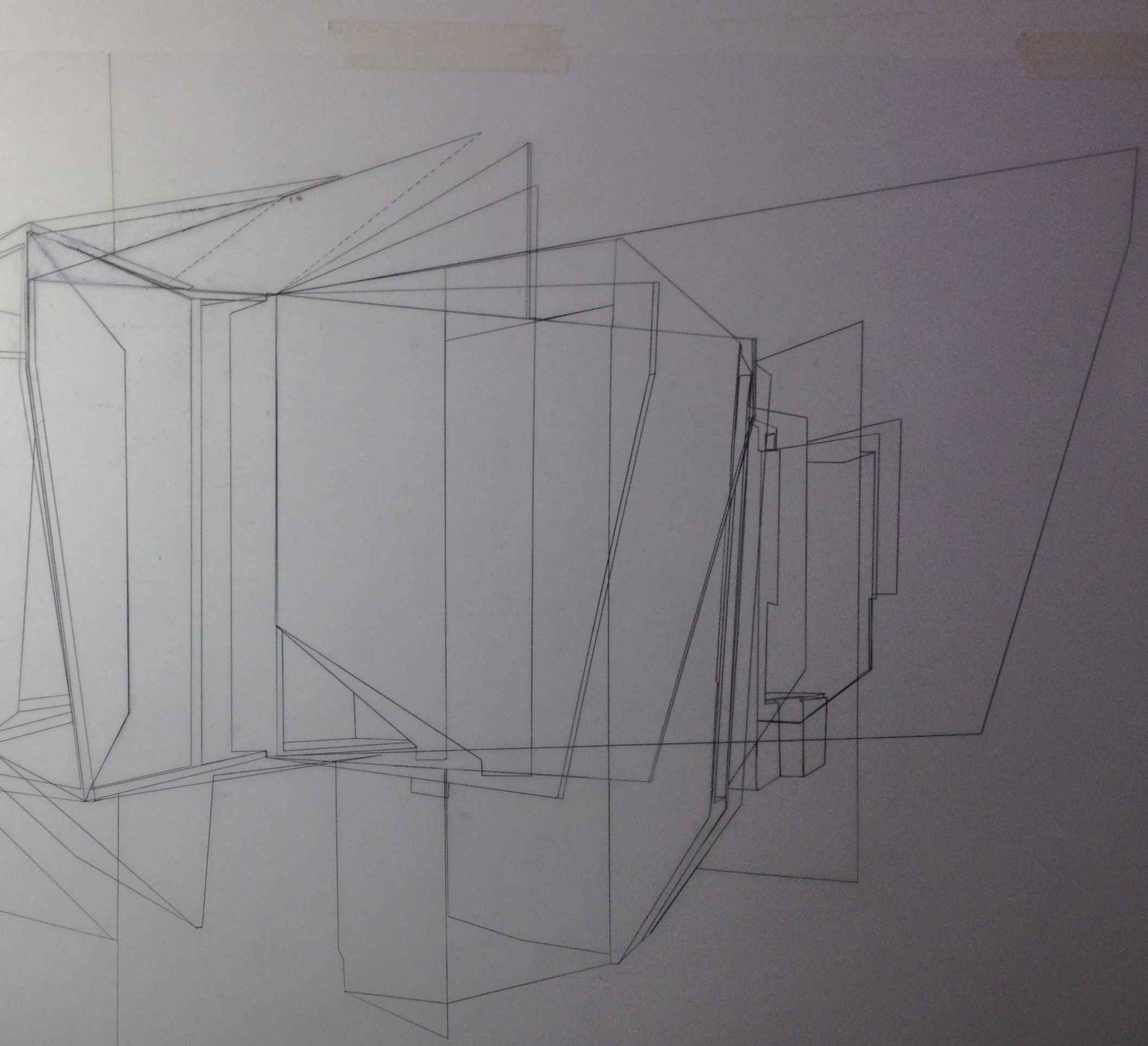
I use the film made by Saikiko to draw with. I project the film onto my drawing table. As I see us talking about and handling the cupboard, the hidden resolution of the edifice becomes present. When I look at the footage I know more than what is seen as I was there and participated in the event. A reflective action and understanding occurs when looking at a representation of an experience.

The silence of the structure makes palpable the fact that not all has been understood with regard to the specificity of the volume and what it might reveal with regards to the *point of view* query.

The point of view is the stand point or position towards the observed. The standpoint is of fundamental importance when talking about the performative space between the observed and the observer. It is fundamental to finding an entry point into an understanding of the specificity of the observed.

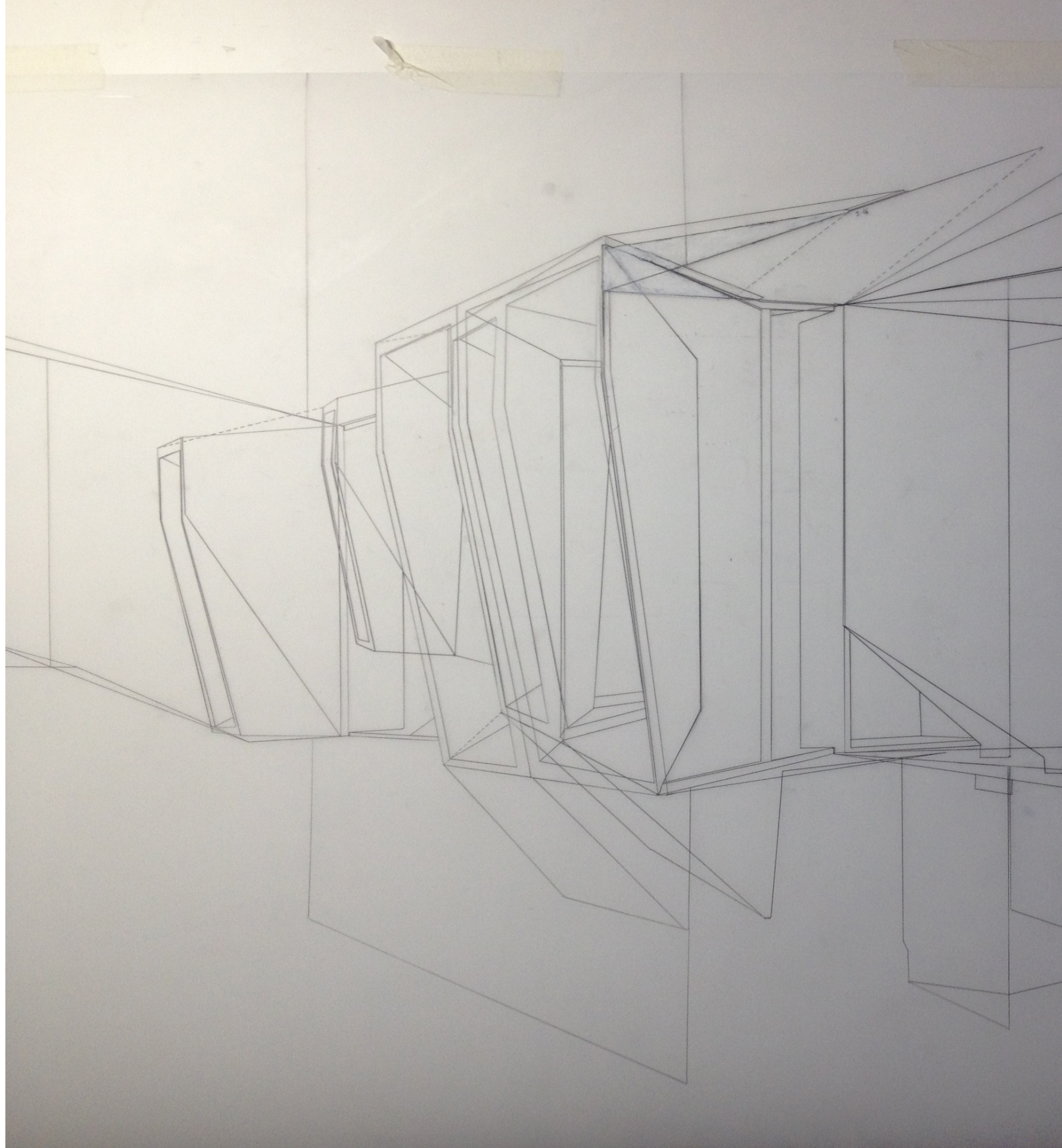
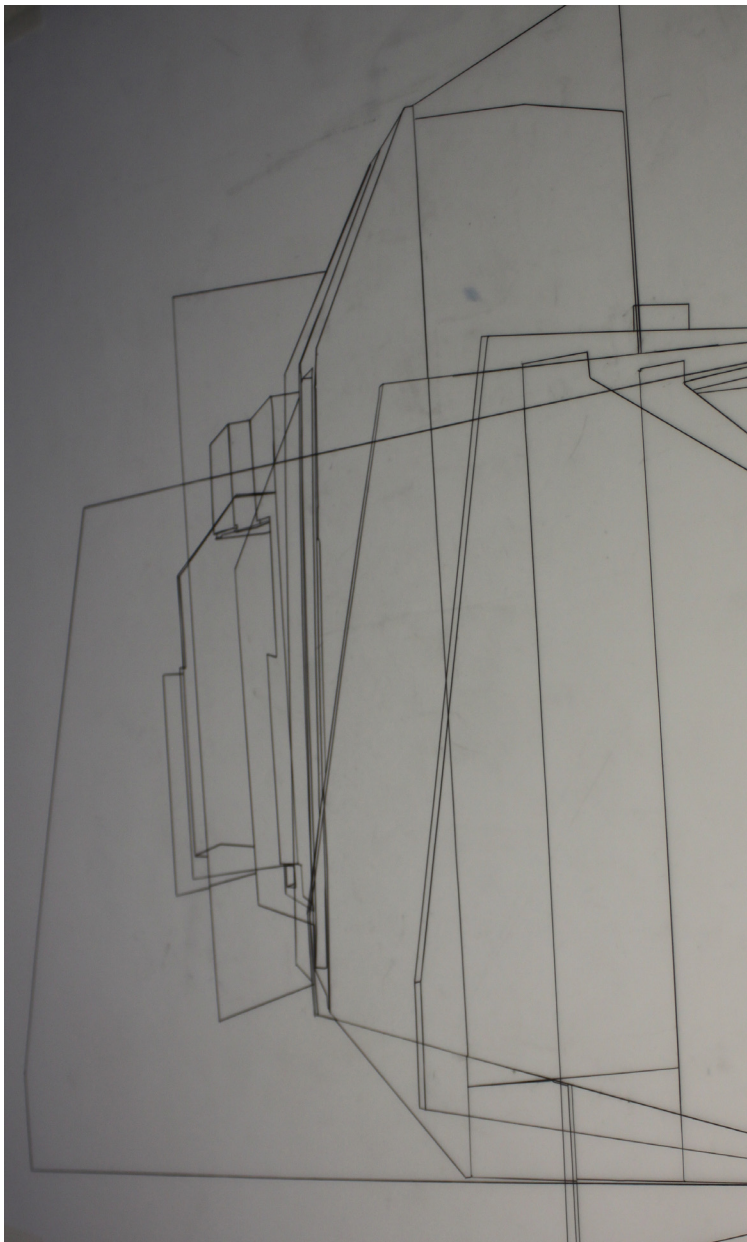






Drawn studies investigating point of view and their spatial implications. Although performative qualities of the cupboard in operation are shown, the drawings remain very much representational in character at this point in time.

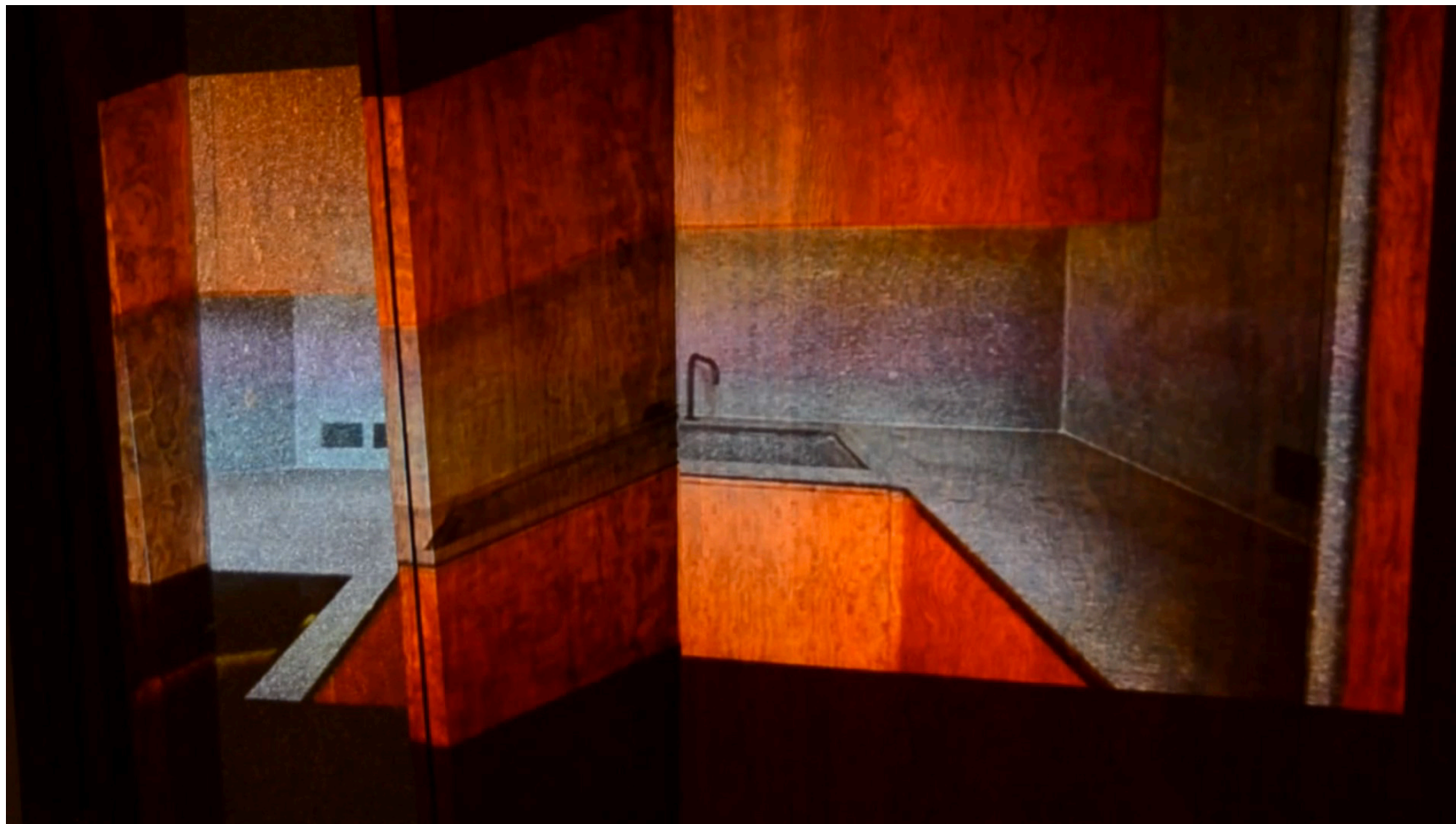












Ephraim Joris and I asked Kyveli Anastassiadi to produce a film with us. Kyveli worked on the Stanhope project when she was a student working for us in London. She knew the project very well and had access to film equipment. Ephraim and I had conversations and feedback sessions with her as she tested how to capture the performance of this volume on-site. The film-making itself became a testing ground and a generative medium instead of a mere representation.

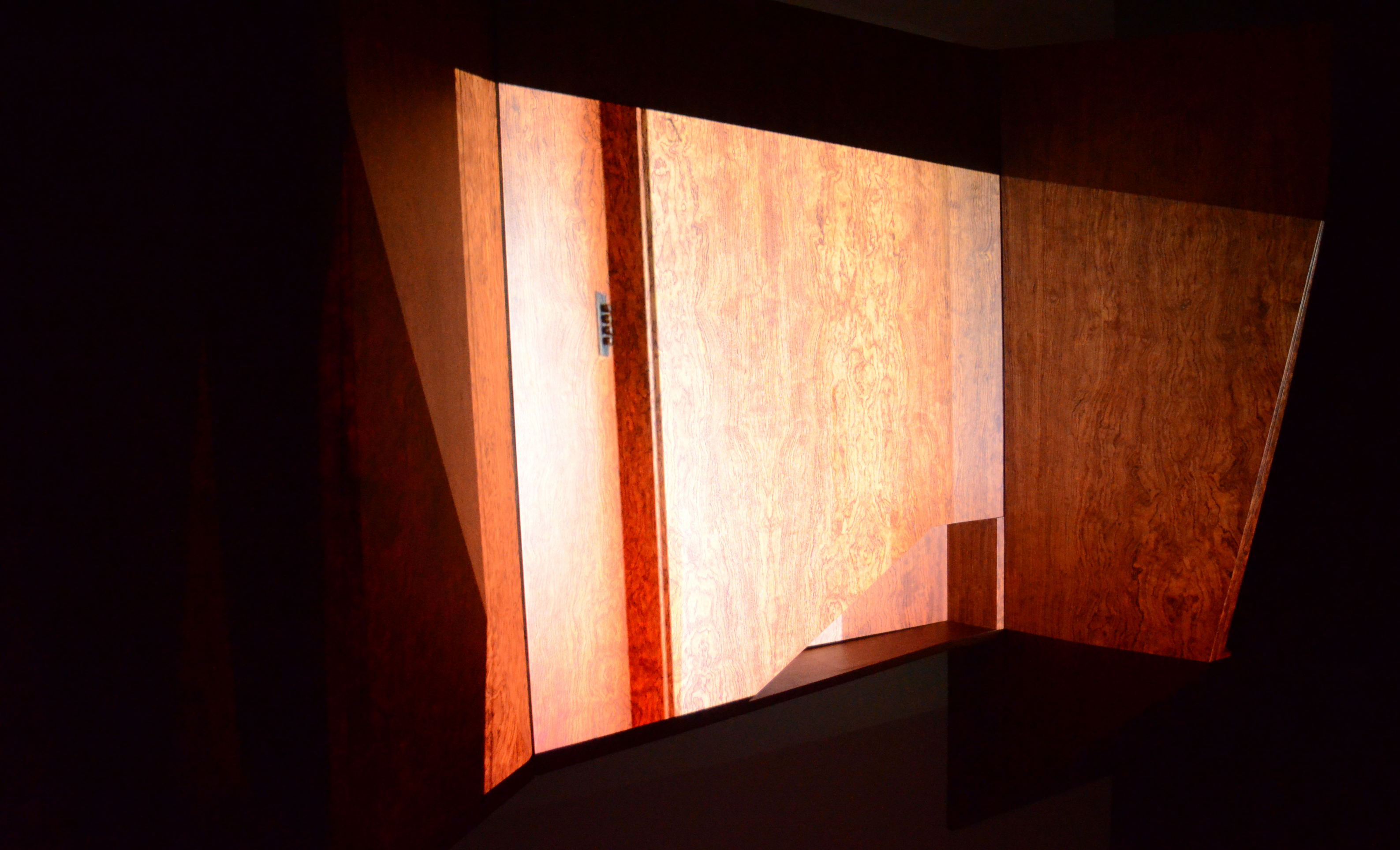
Under the governing hands of Ephraim and Kyveli, the spatial performative elements discussed with Sakiko about the establishment of relations between observer and observed started to lead a life on their own. But the tools used to identify and generate specificity – such as repetition and iteration, slowness and articulation by isolating – were incorporated in the production process.

With reference to Maya Deren, the film starts with the pragmatic idea about how to approach or look at this object. The protagonist (Kyveli herself) handles the cupboard. The film then moves into sequences where the cupboard becomes the protagonist and the experience is subject to its performance. The protagonists (Kyveli and the cupboard in turn) take a critical look at themselves (copies of the same protagonist in the same frame by multiple projections and other techniques) through repetition and iterations.

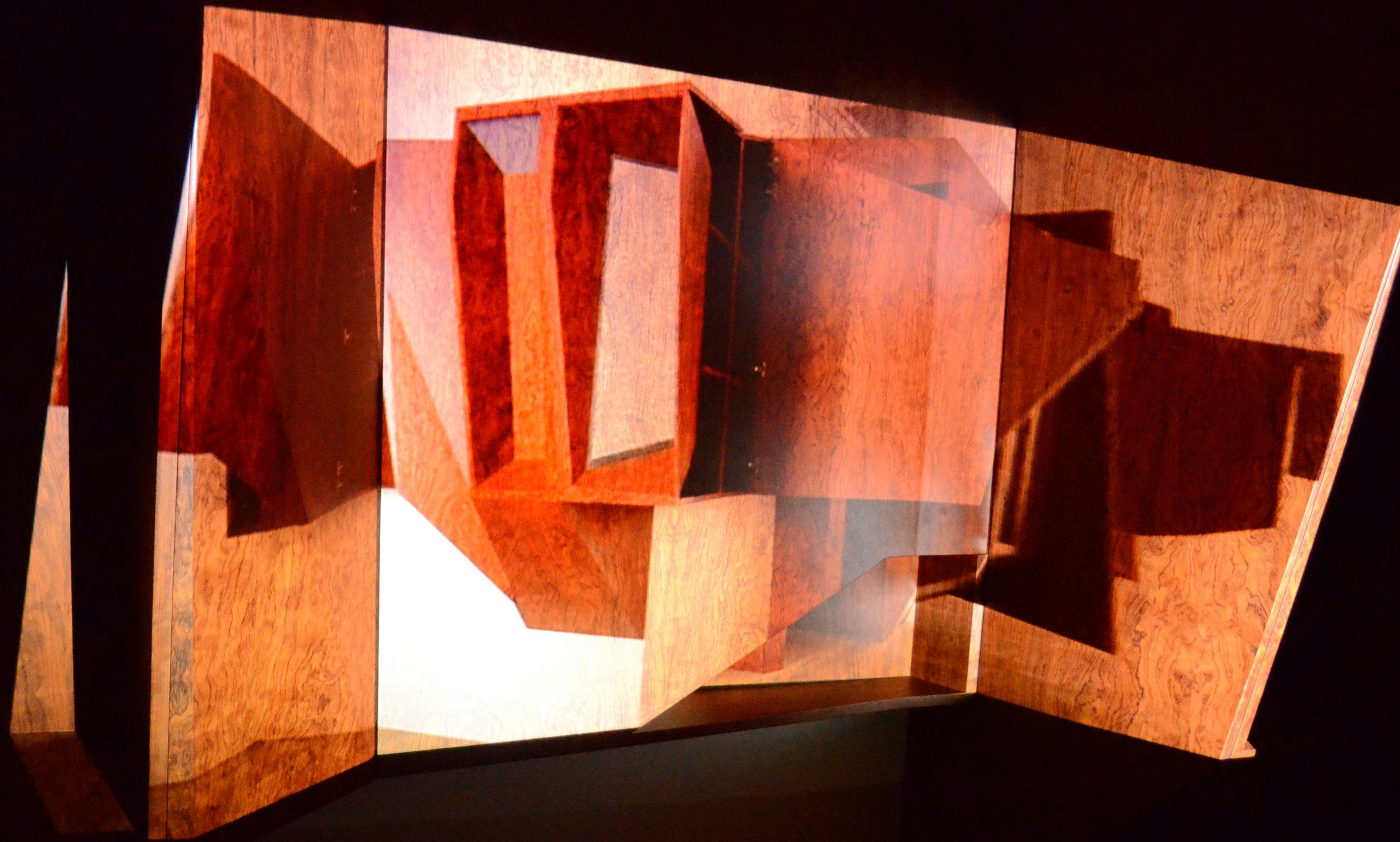
More than a clarifying statement, the process and result seems to unlock an experiential space that does not belong any more to Conceived Space, but rather opens routes to represent Perceived Space.

<http://vimeo.com/71431382>





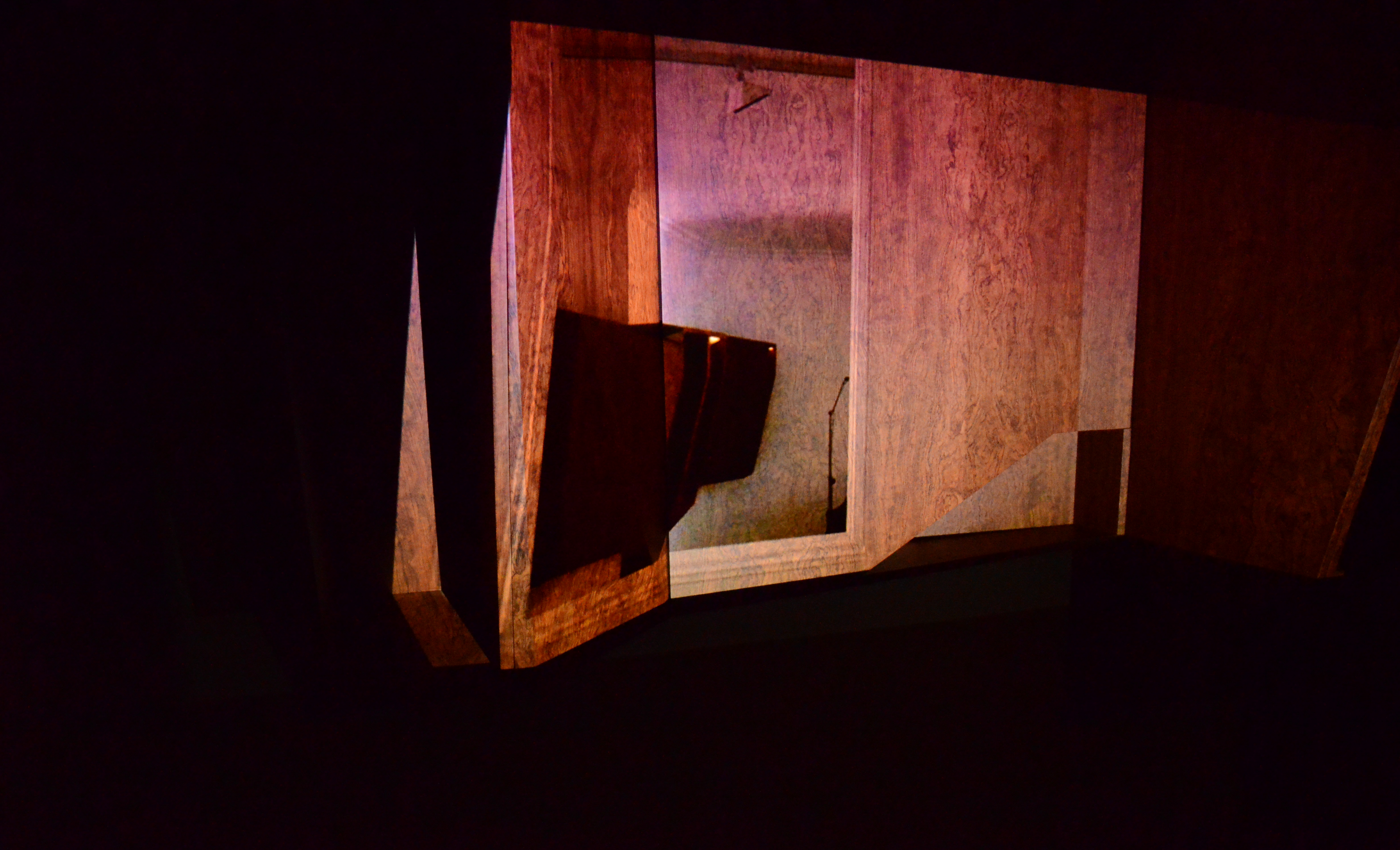








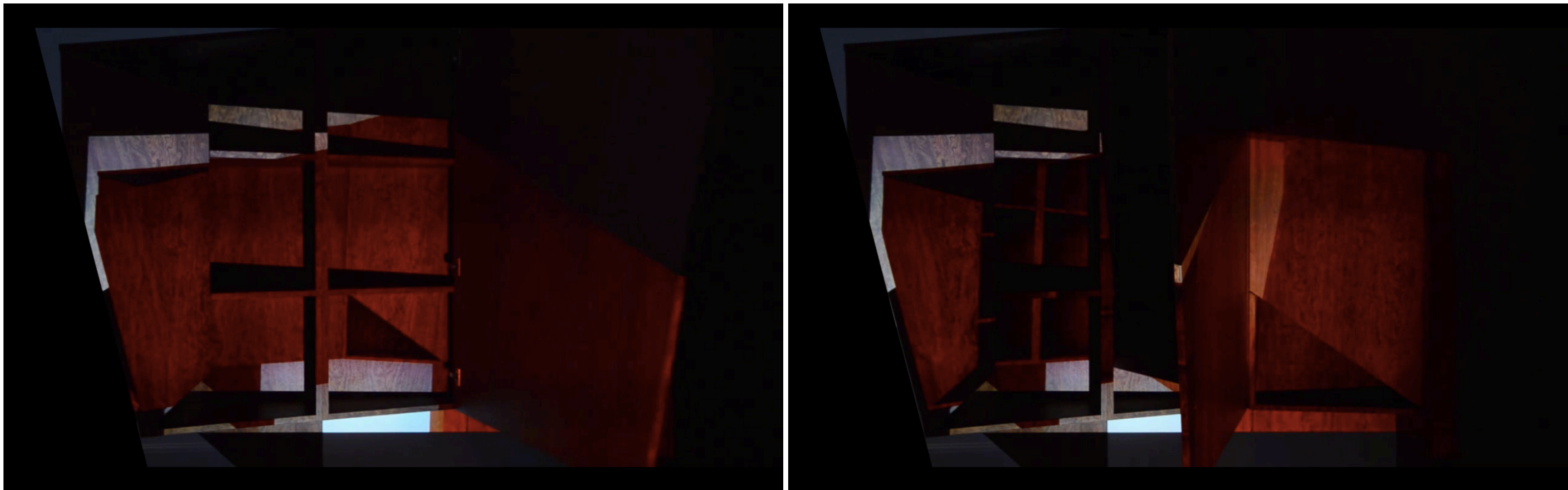








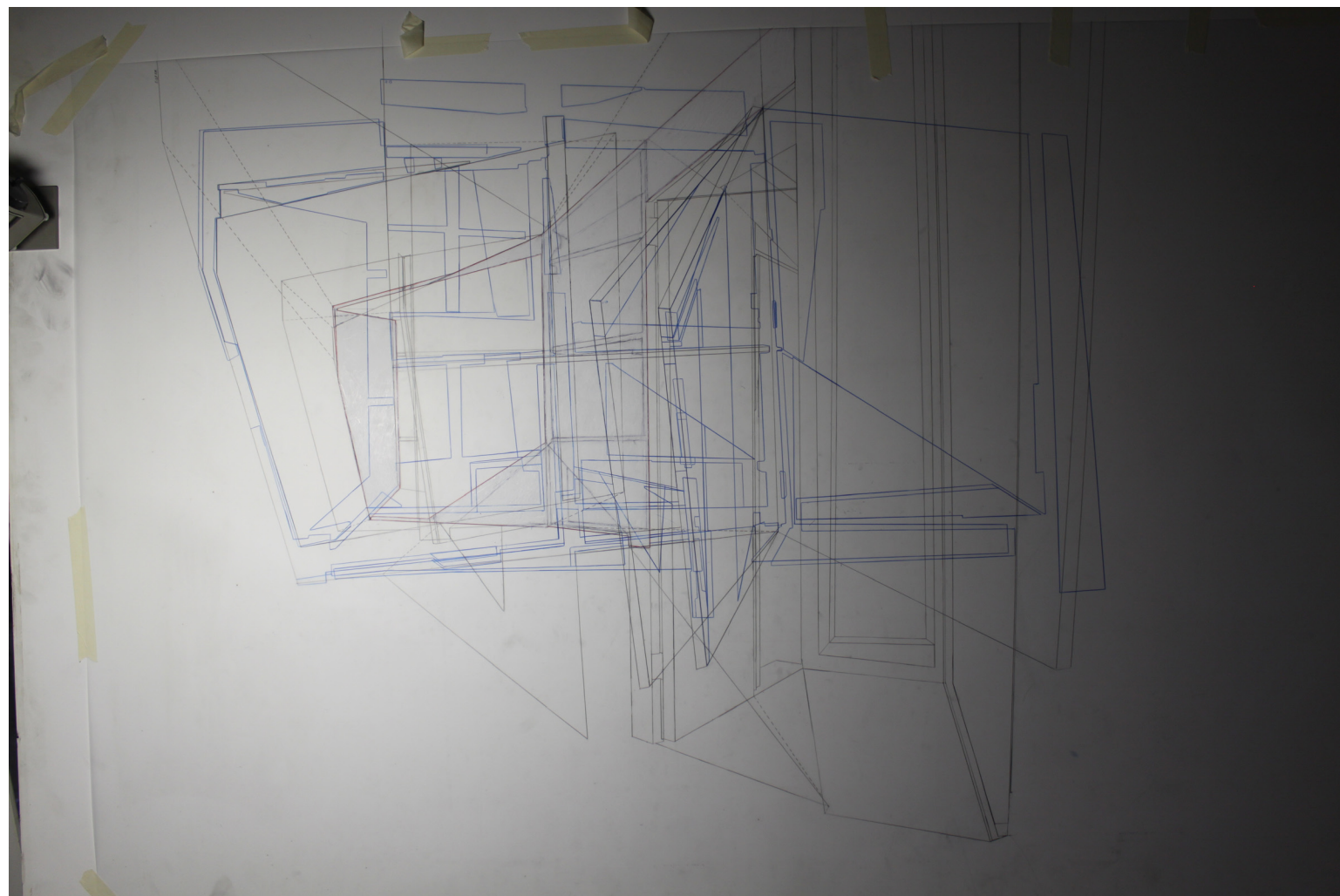
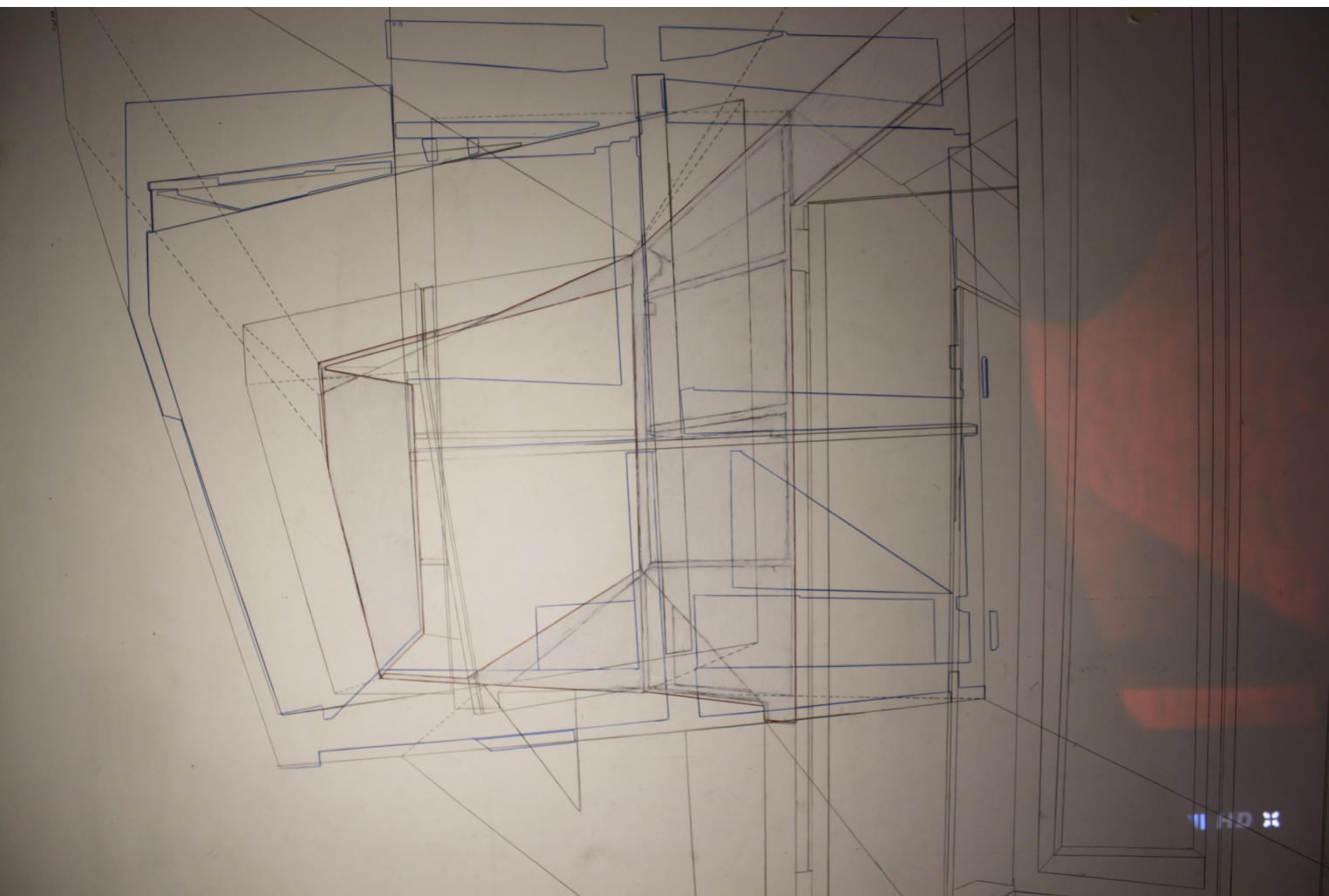




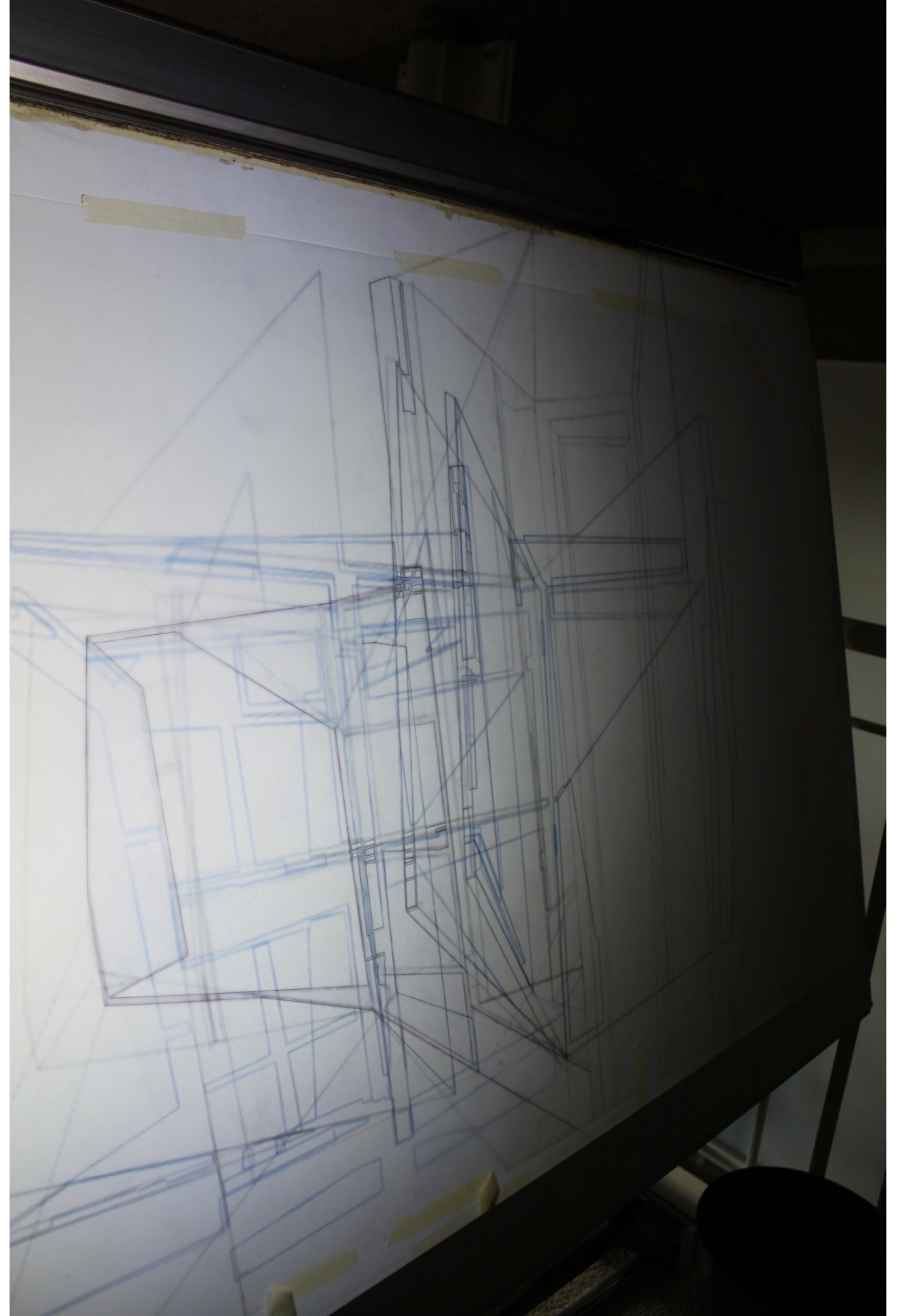
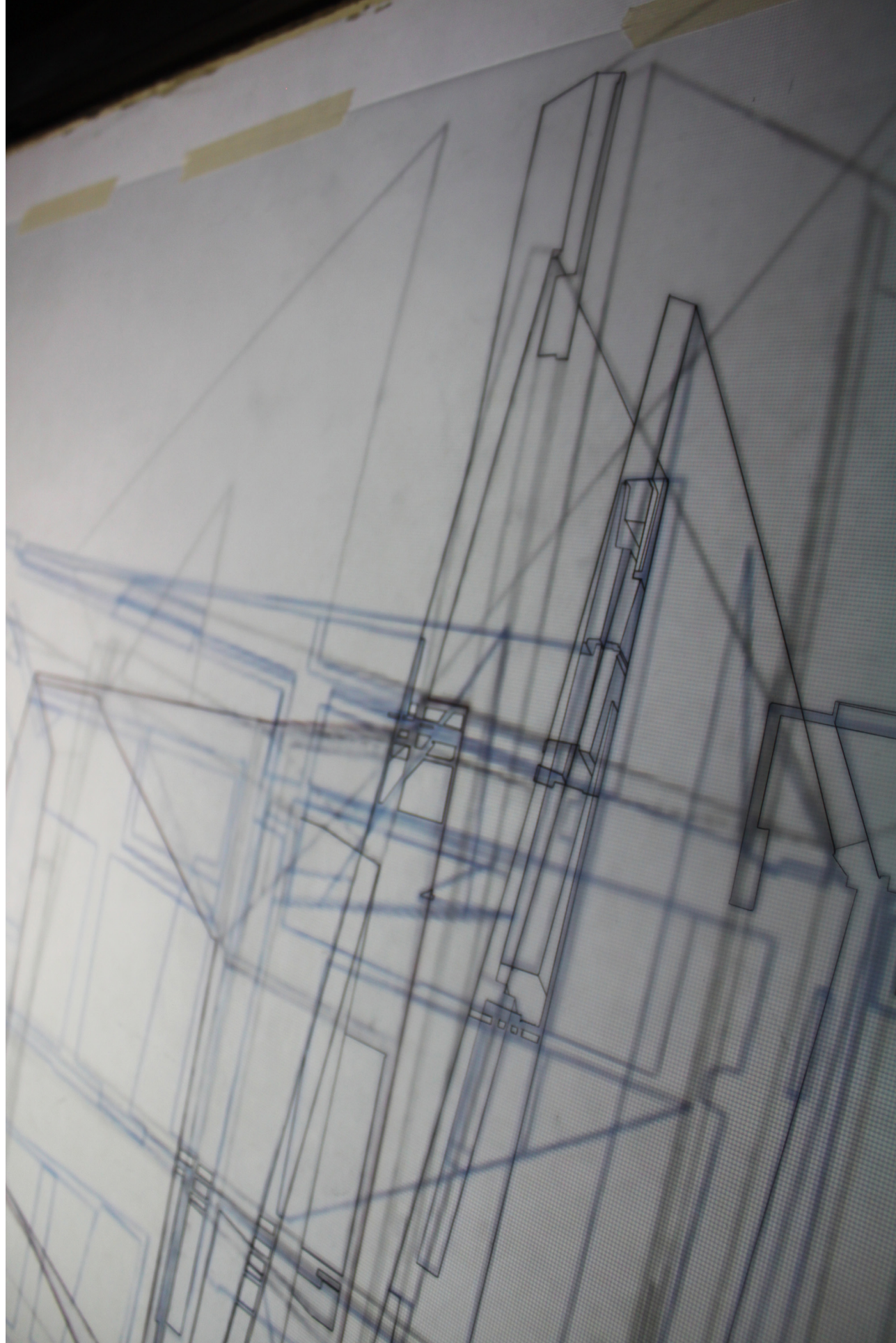
These are stills from a twenty-second sequence from the film (10:28m to 10:48m) used as a basis for the *point of view* investigation.

The sequence was recorded and subsequently projected onto the same place on the cupboard where it was filmed. That sequence was enacted again concurrent with the projection of the sequence, and filmed again. The projected and real-time actions are not simultaneous, they stand in composition to one another. A cycle of action - filming and projecting onto the cupboard - is layered so that the complex choreography of form changes in repetition and different iterations take place. All form originates however from the same movement.

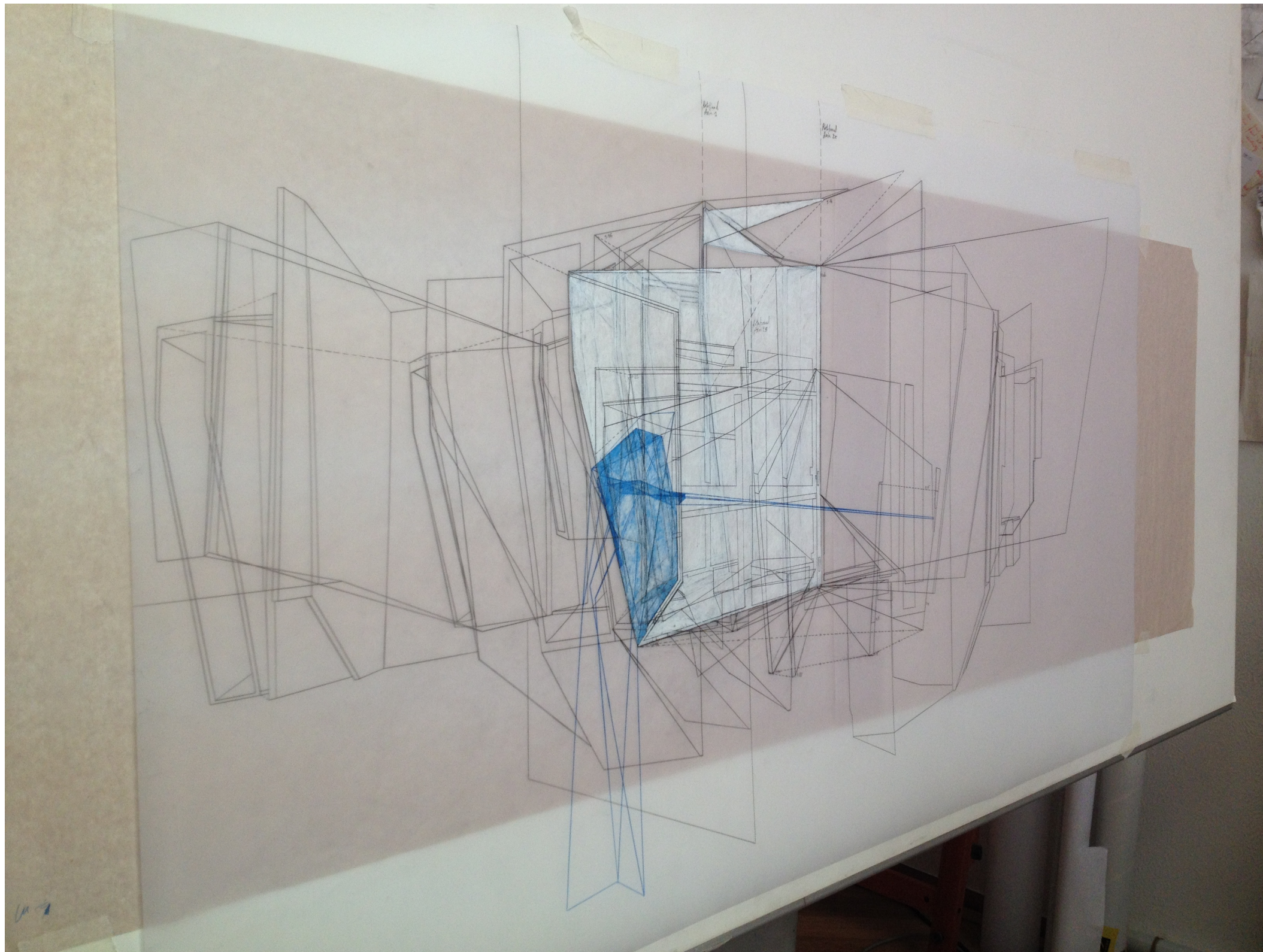






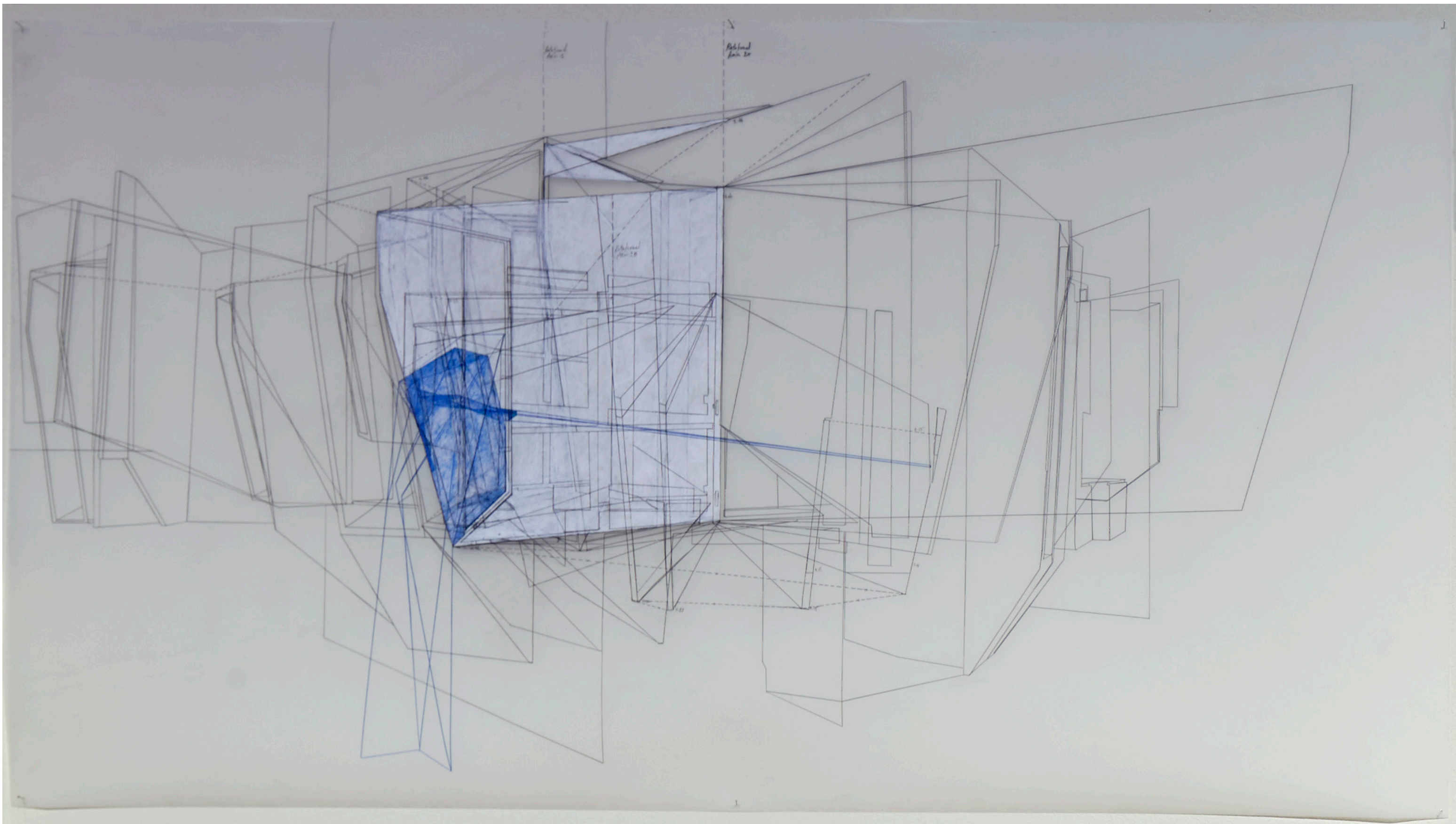




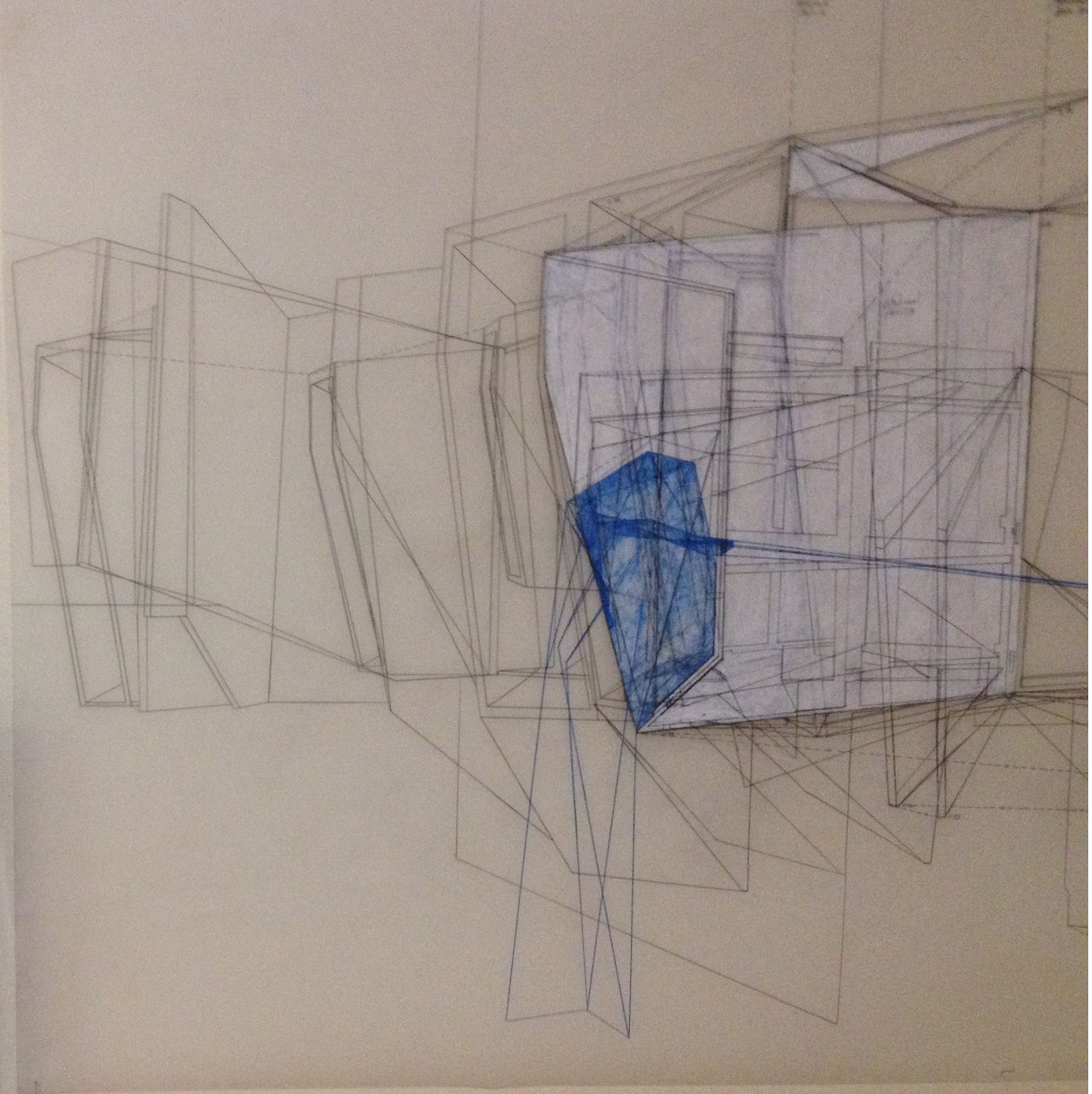


*The set of drawings leads to a final drawing incorporating several point of views, exhibited together with the film at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2014*











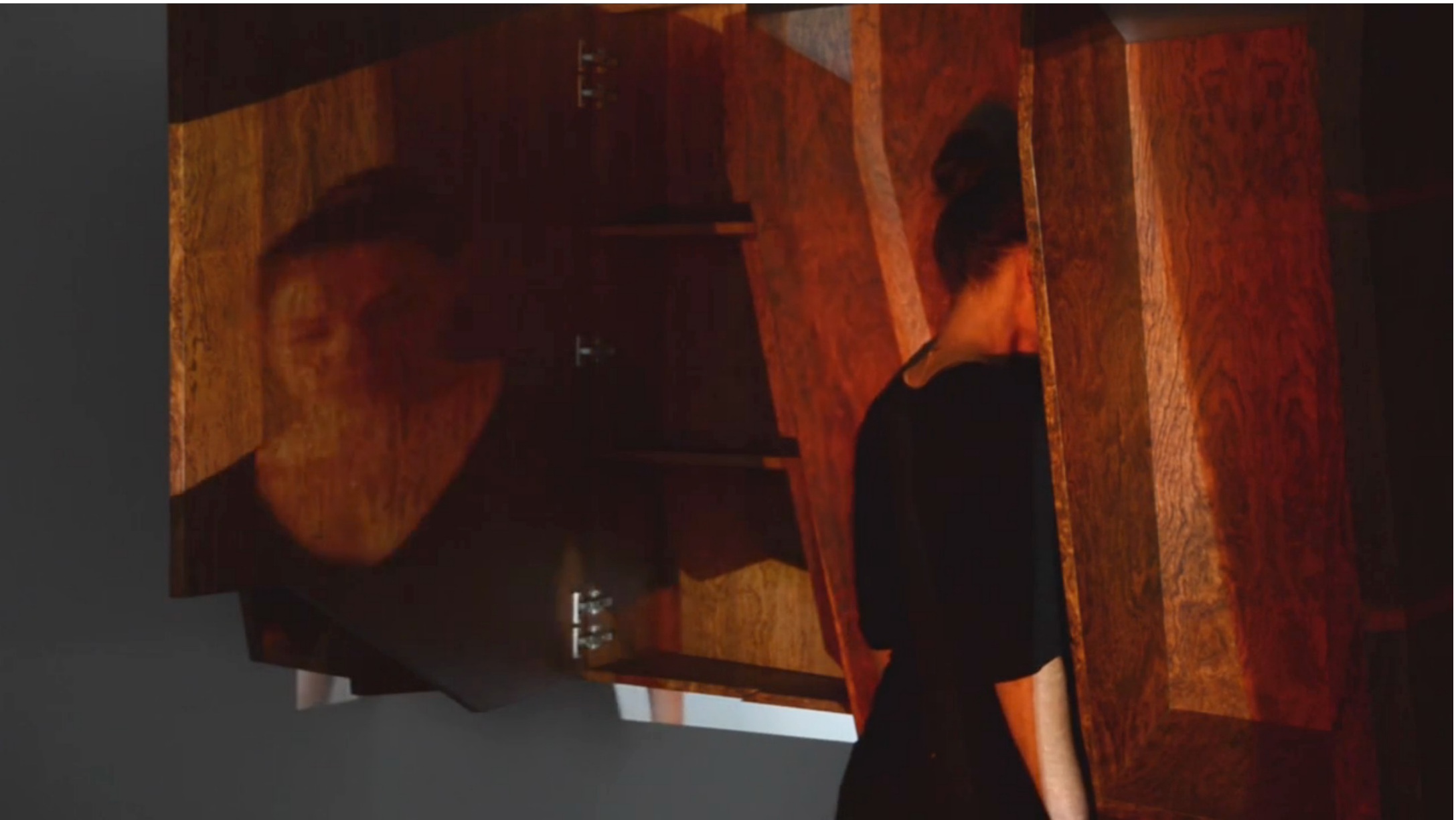
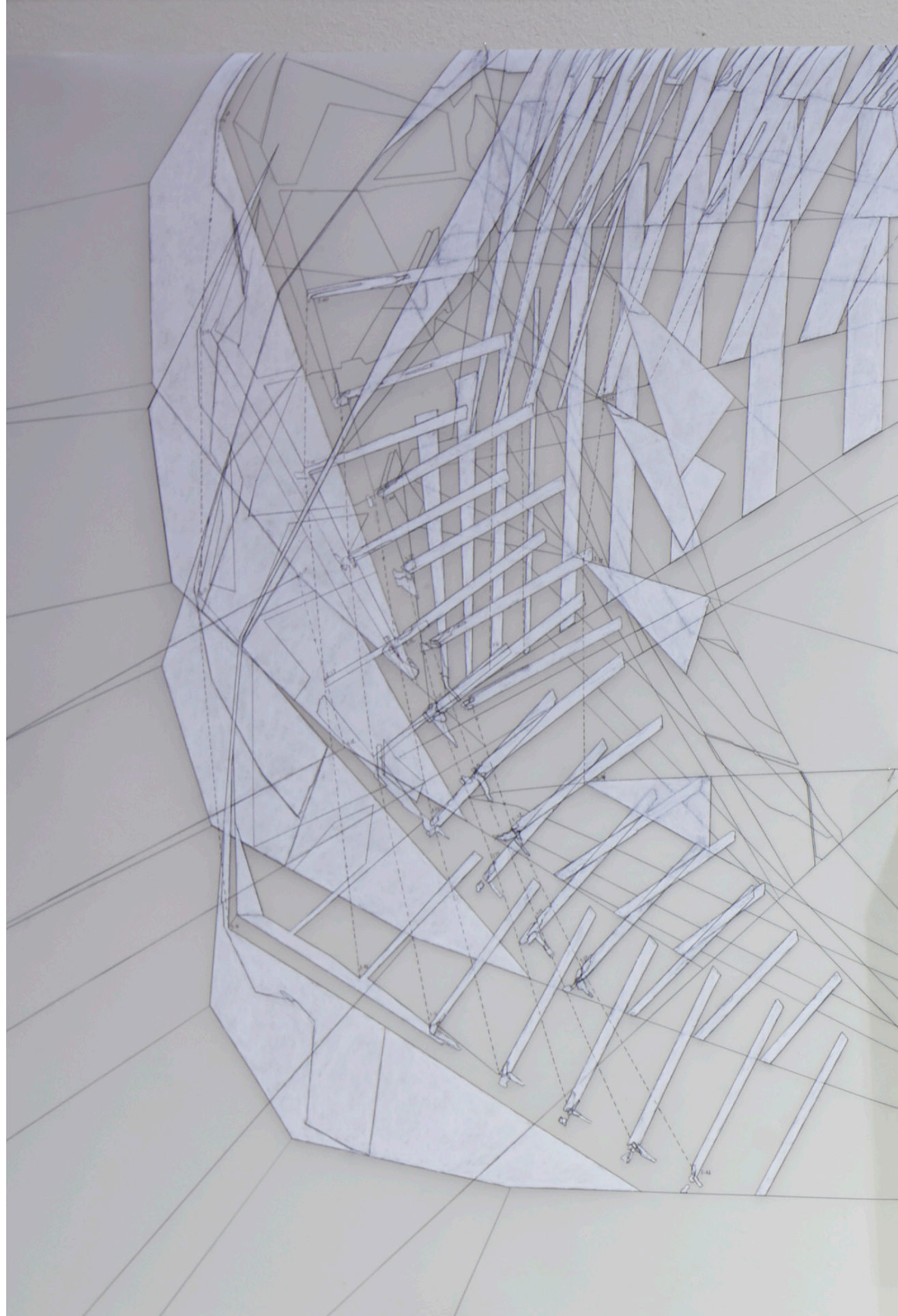
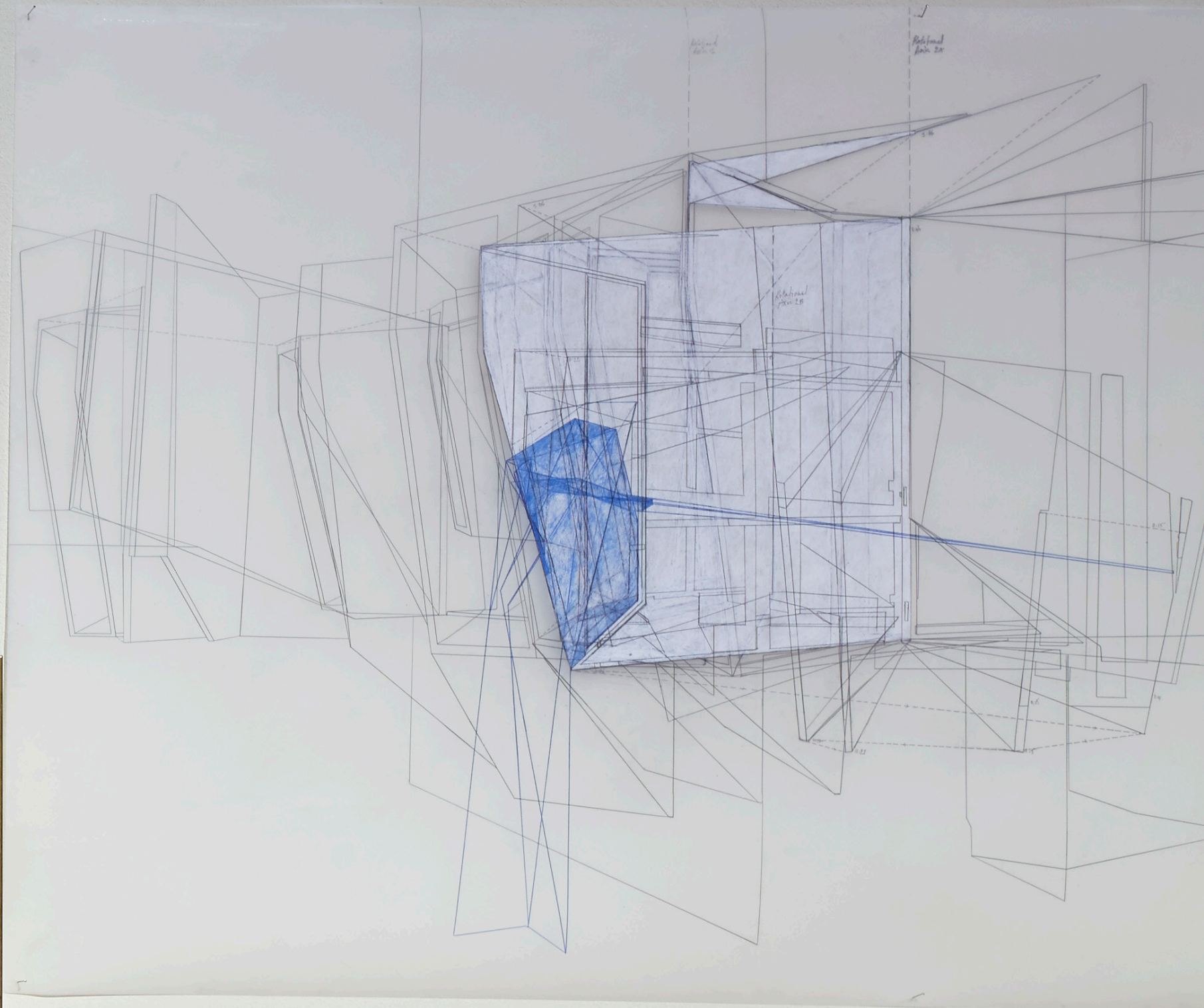




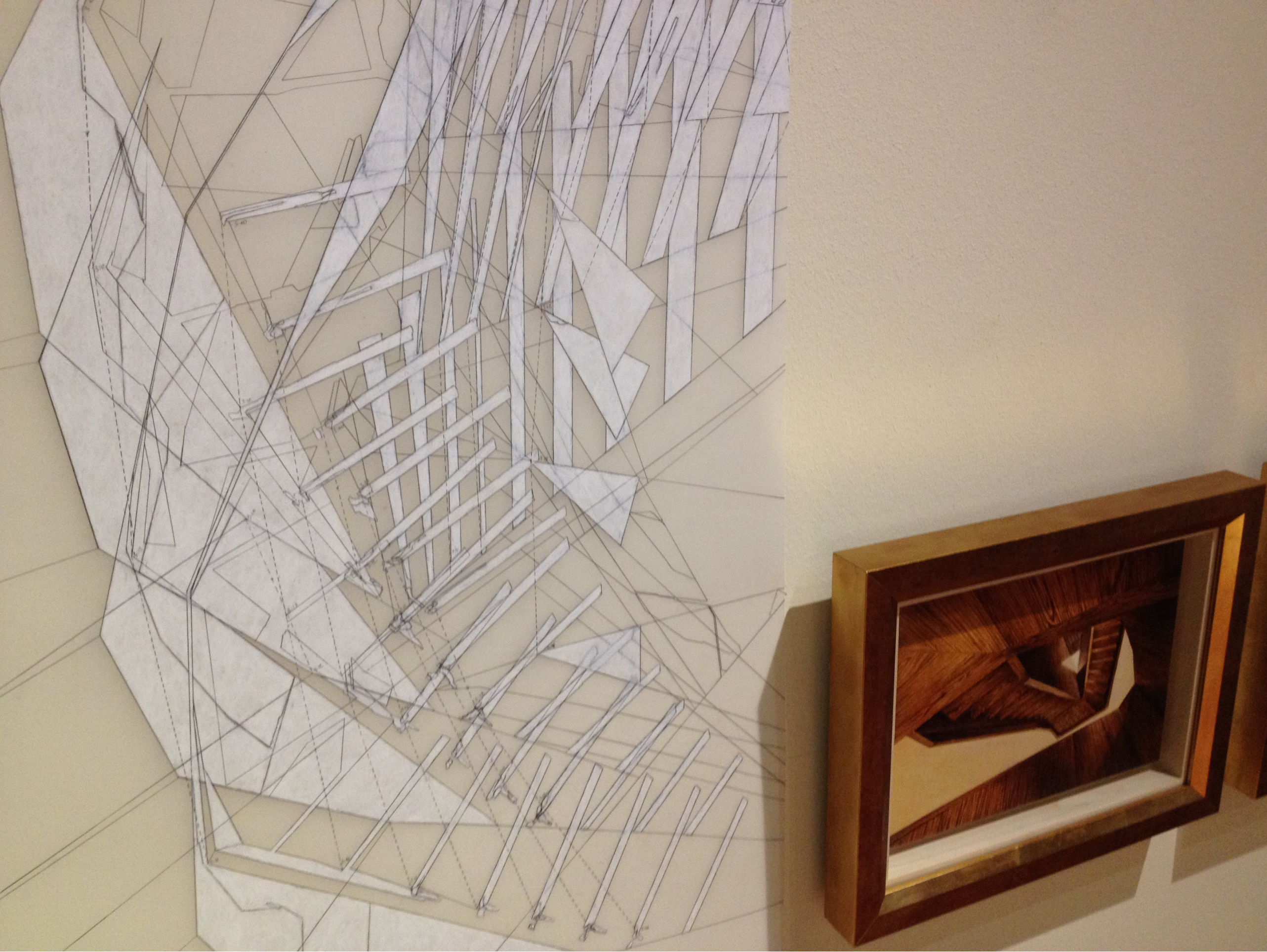
Photo by Nils Koenning











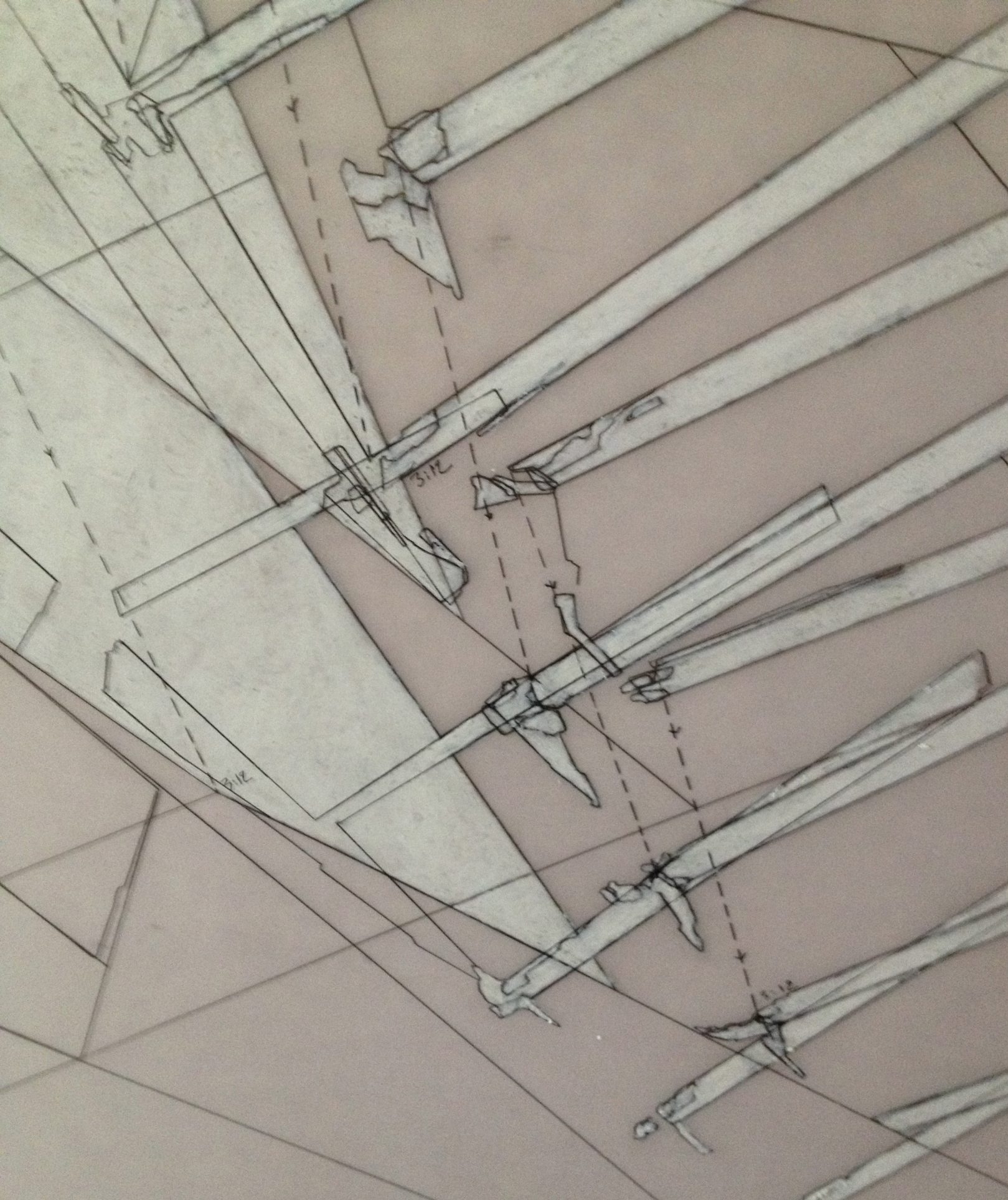
*Point Of View* devises a direct relationship between the observer and the observed, capturing the performative space in-between observer and the space; between the drawing and the drawn object.

Between physicality and the grain of the immediate, between form and content I find circumstances that are orchestral in their power.

*'Turning Staircase', 2014 Venice Biennale*

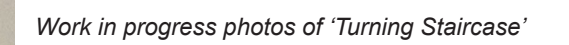
*Drawing based on a film fragment 'The girl upstairs' by Francis Ghersci, a short film is filmed on a double helix staircase designed by Architecture Project.*



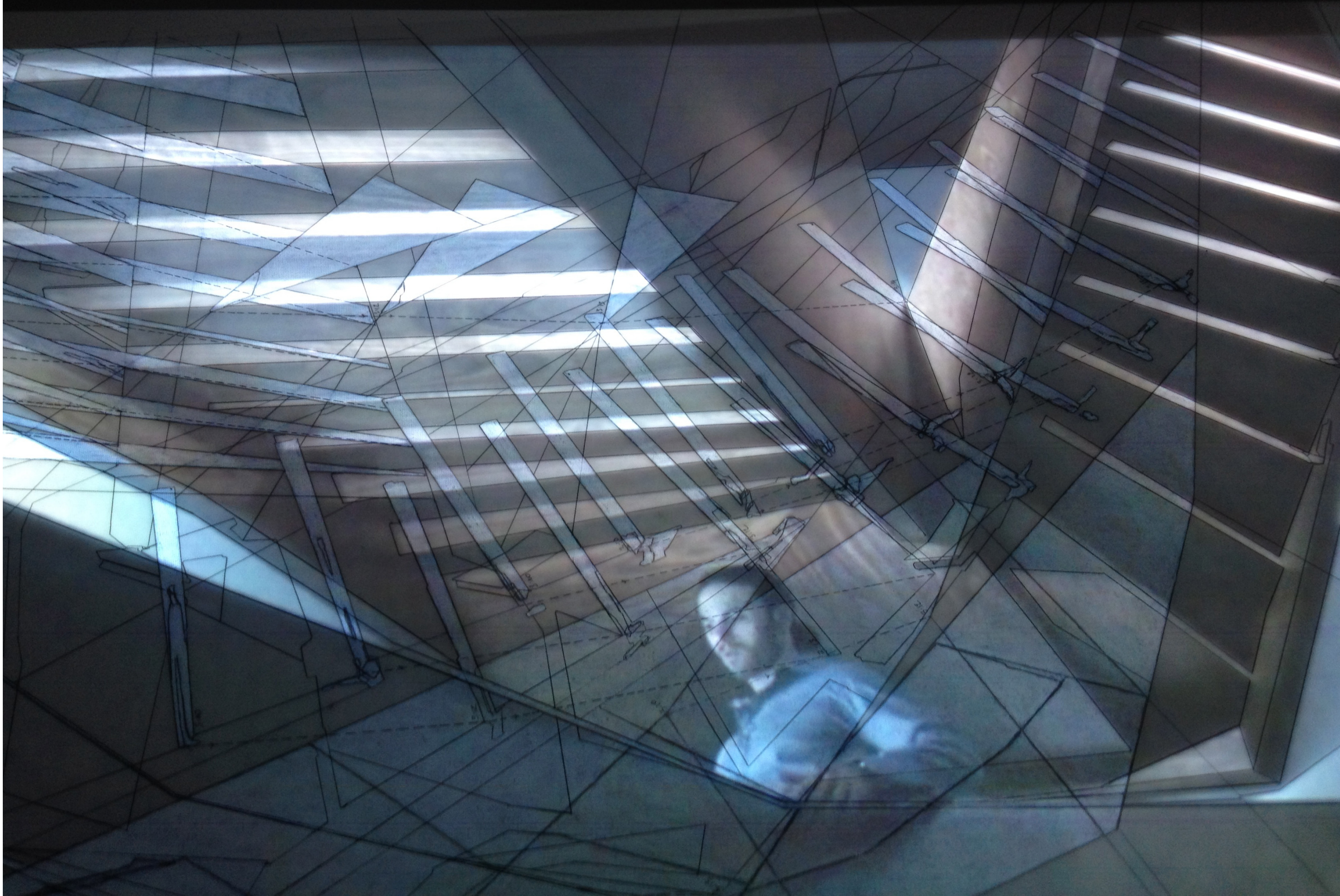


*'Detail of 'Turning Staircase'*

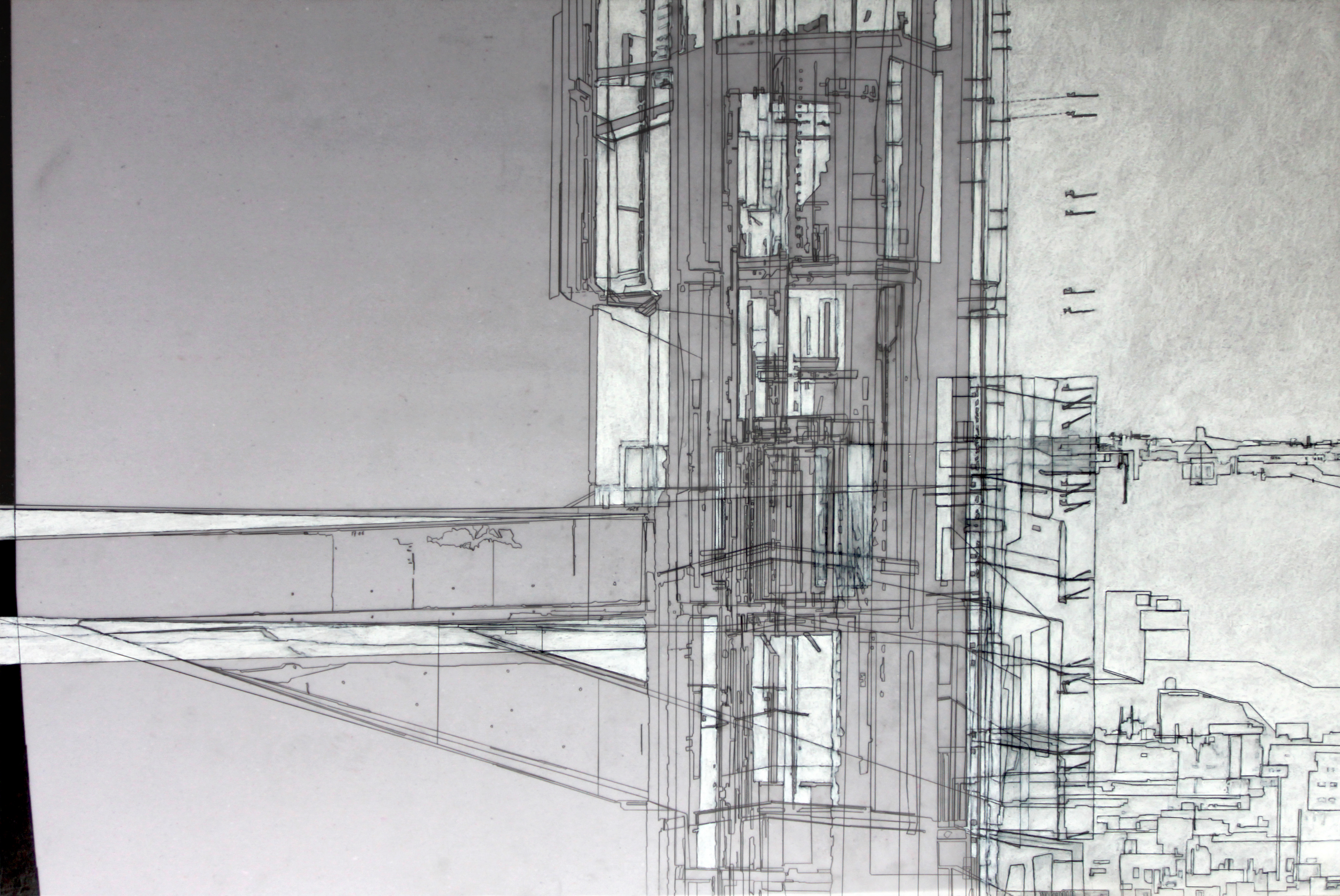














*'The Lift', based on the film 'The Lift' by Bettina Hutcheck, a film documenting life surrounding the urban elevator in Valletta, a project of Architecture Project.  
Drawing exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2014, Palazzo Mora, Space, Time, Existence*





Marcel Duchamp, *Jeune homme triste dans un train*, 1911-12



Marcel Duchamp, *Nu descendant un escalier* 1912

*“There is no feeling, no idea, no volition which is not undergoing change every moment: if a mental state ceased to vary, its duration would cease to flow.”*

*H. Bergson, The Evolution of Life - Mechanism and Teleology, Chapter 1: Creative Evolution, 1911. Translated by A.Mitchell 1998*



### Place in its momentary status

I've always been intrigued by how the cubists represented and depicted objects as an expression of their observations, despite my ambivalence towards paintings by Braque and Picasso, founders of the Cubism. However, two paintings by Marcel Duchamp that are influenced by the Cubist movement strike a chord: *Jeune Homme Triste Dans un Train* (1911-12) and *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912) – the former being a study for the latter.

According to the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, Duchamp's primary concern in this painting *Jeune homme triste dans un train*, is the depiction of two movements, that of the train in which we observe the young man smoking and that of the lurching figure itself. Repetition and multiplication of lines and volumes of the figure form the train movement; the independent sideways motion of the figure is represented by a directionally contrary series of repetitions. Duchamp's acknowledgement of the influence of chronophotography and the related ideas of the Italian Futurists are tangible here.[01]

Interestingly, the Guggenheim collection notes that this 'device' is used by Duchamp "not only to illustrate movement, but also to integrate the young man with his murky surroundings"[01] (contribution to the general mood of the painting, the melancholic atmosphere of the painting).

The word 'device' is used here referring to the way Duchamp depicts the object, which is seen as a tool through which he is able to express something particular.

Although Duchamp was influenced by chronophotography, his methods differ from the depiction of movement in the methods of Muybridge or Etienne-Jules Marey.

For Muybridge and Marey, precision is of primordial importance as their procedures and results were not about expressing something but were trying to understand and proof something.

For Duchamp, the iteration and repetition of lines, volumes and surfaces are an abstraction of the human figure. He is not physically interested in the exact shift that appears between two frames, he is interested in the expression generated by the depiction of all frames.

My interest lies closer to the specificity Muybridge and Marey pursued - though not to proof what is visible, but to extract what lies beyond what is visible.

Jules-Etienne Marey, *Diagram of a Jumping Figure*, from a *Chronophotograph* (c.1885)

Two interesting statements I can relate to and contextualise in my own work;

#### (1) 'The illustration of movement'

The frozen moment of the depicted includes what happened before and after. There is a latent (unconscious) certainty of continuity. When we see a photograph of a situation we know something happened before the photo was taken and something happened after the photo was taken. We actually look at the photo with that knowledge. Depicting what happens before and what happens afterwards in one and the same image, investigates the link between the different stages of one developing into another, and attempts to include the notion of constant change. A photographed portrait, therefore, holds a potent performance. The portrait holds the performance of the before and of the after. I refer to the portrait as an arrested moment, the threshold moment.

In this drawing process from one drawing to another, there is a pivotal moment or a threshold occasion (in reference to Heidegger's reference to poiesis as a 'bringing-forth') when something that represents something moves away from its standing as one thing to become something else.) That threshold moment is what I call 'the non-representational moment'; the moment of becoming essential to poiesis of the project.

The non-representational moment is the moment where the depicted (the represented) turns into an autonomous object. At that particular moment, it has shed its scaled figurative representational role and acquired a presence. Depending on the nature of the object and drawing, this non-representational moment might only take a fraction of a moment before it is engaged again in our thinking and ready to serve the representational once more. That fraction of a moment is the drawn arrested moment, now it can be looked at and considered.

With this practice I aim towards a resistance of 'representations' engaging with a design discourse of degrees of 'non-representation'. This sets up a practice of paradox; negotiating architecture as representational in the narrative of place yet resisting representation (avoiding a subordination to the preconceived content or image) by drawing presence through levels of absence. 'Representation' is developed through modes of 'non-representation'.

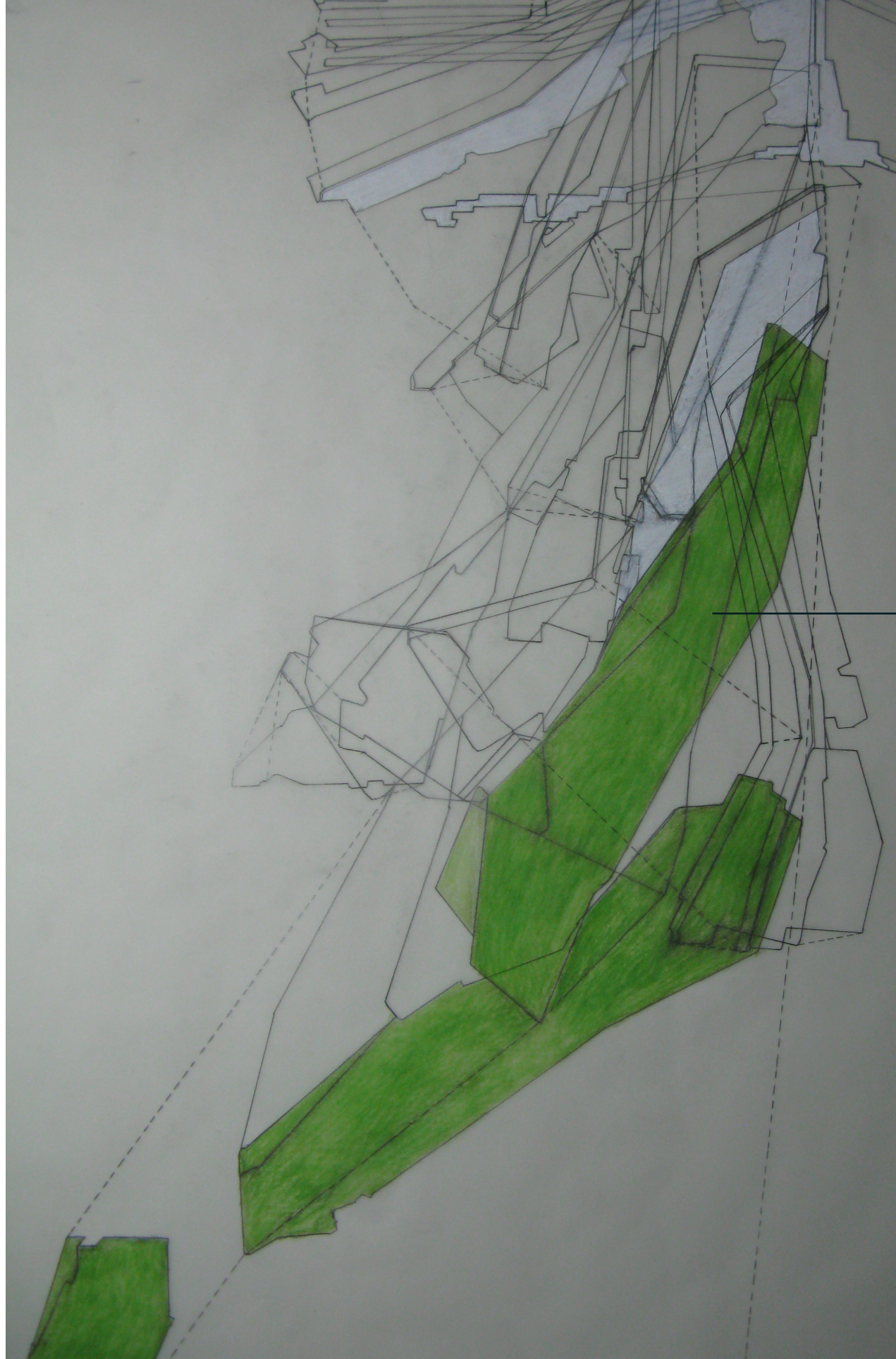
This paradoxical practice is critical to considering what the role of the representation is, and its limits.

[01] Lucy Flint, *Nude (study)*, *Sad Young Man on a Train*, 1911-12;  
<http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artwork/1179>









### Where is the portrait in the drawing?

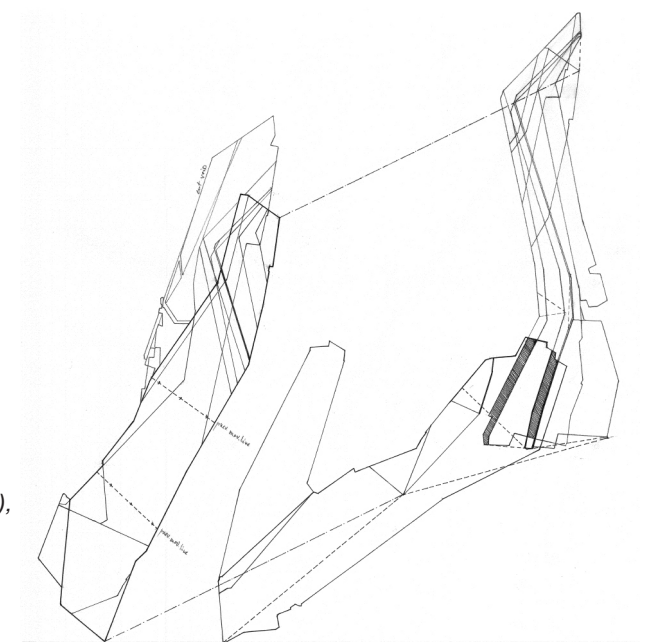
In the drawing set 'Drawing Out Collapse', this is present in the architrave depicted as it changes form. One of the threshold moments in a buildings life is its own demolition.

Specifically, in this project it occurs when the architrave is cut loose from the construction and becomes an autonomous object. In the drawing the object changes colour from that moment onwards.

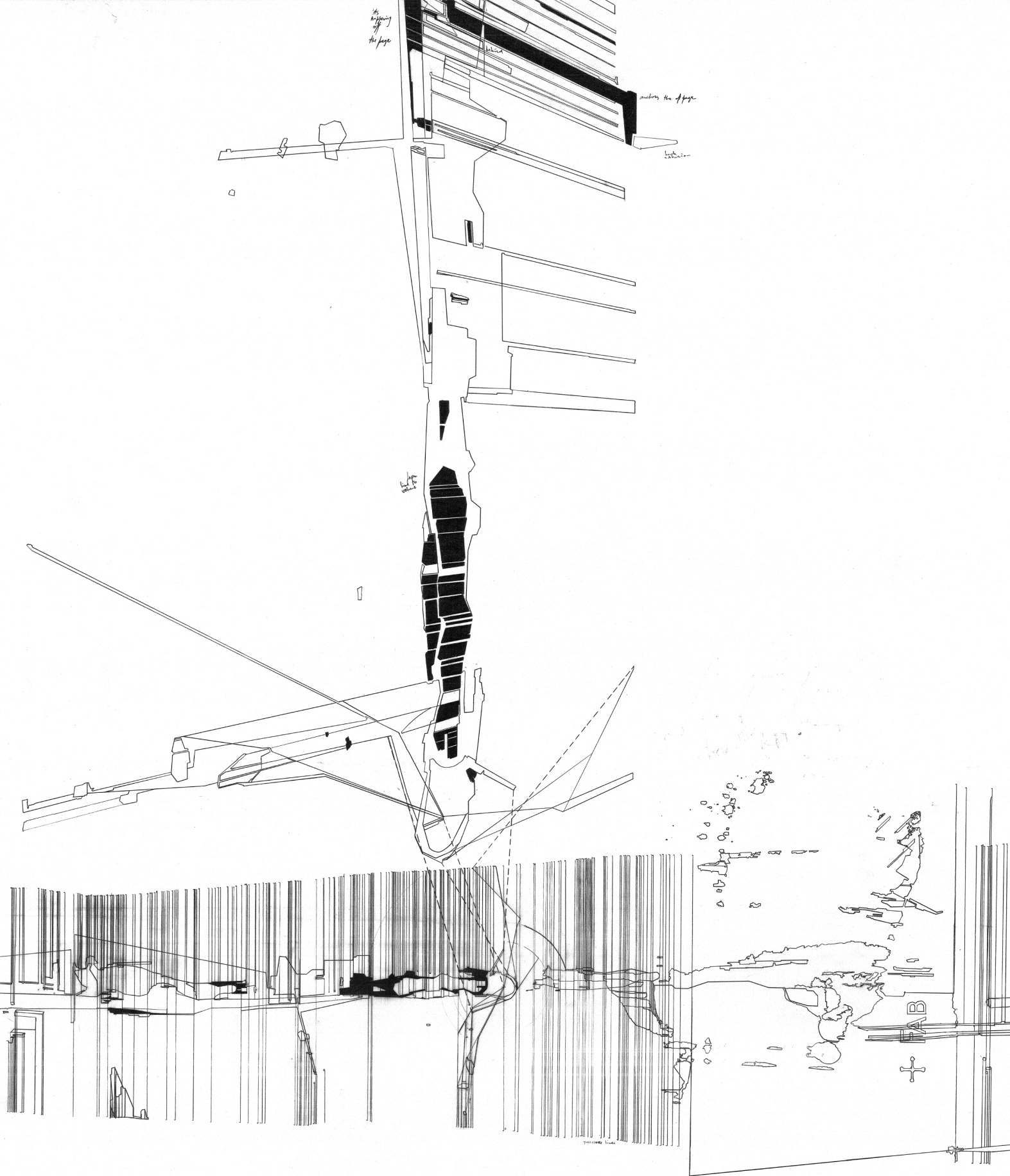
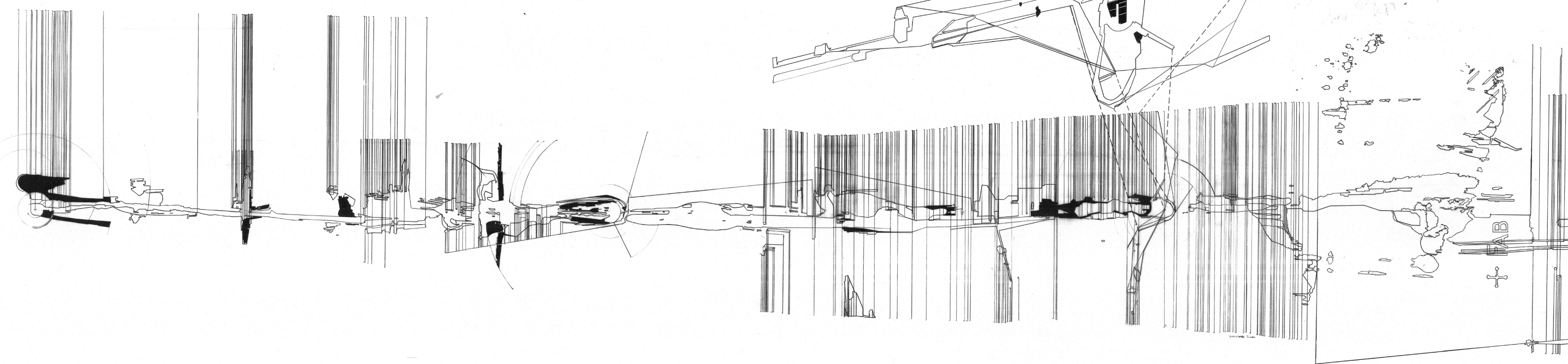
This is the moment when one can let go of the layered burden of meaning and function, and look at pure formal disposition. It is a relief to find this moment of release. It is a moment of release, from the objects point of view in the observers mind and from the observers point of view. The object can now be looked at from other point of views in the 'rotational drawings' that were entirely unthinkable before. It is the moment where the testing ground of the object is broadened to a scale-less, limitless field – until it falls once more into its representational role albeit with a changed nature, a better understanding of its form and capacity.

*The still image. The image is keeping still, for the arrested moment. The image is keeping the moment still. It is holding back and it speaks of its holding. It speaks of its performative nature. A status with a gradient of possibilities (passed and to come), a range of iterations.*

*It seems not that important which exact iteration really will take place. It is important that the presence of iterations are observed. Every observer will see different iterations. Exact and specific. This drawing is not my view, it is others views as well*







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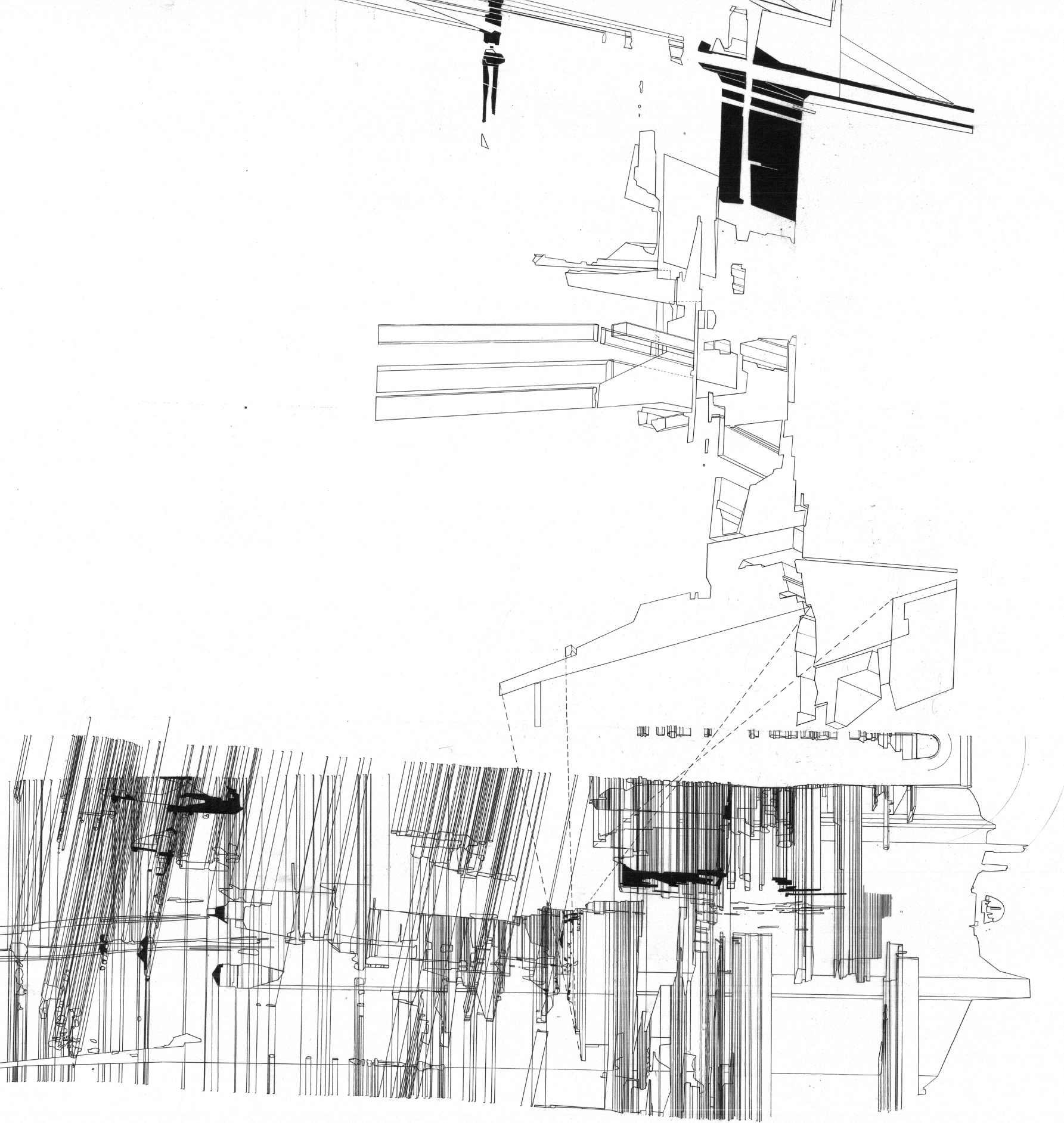
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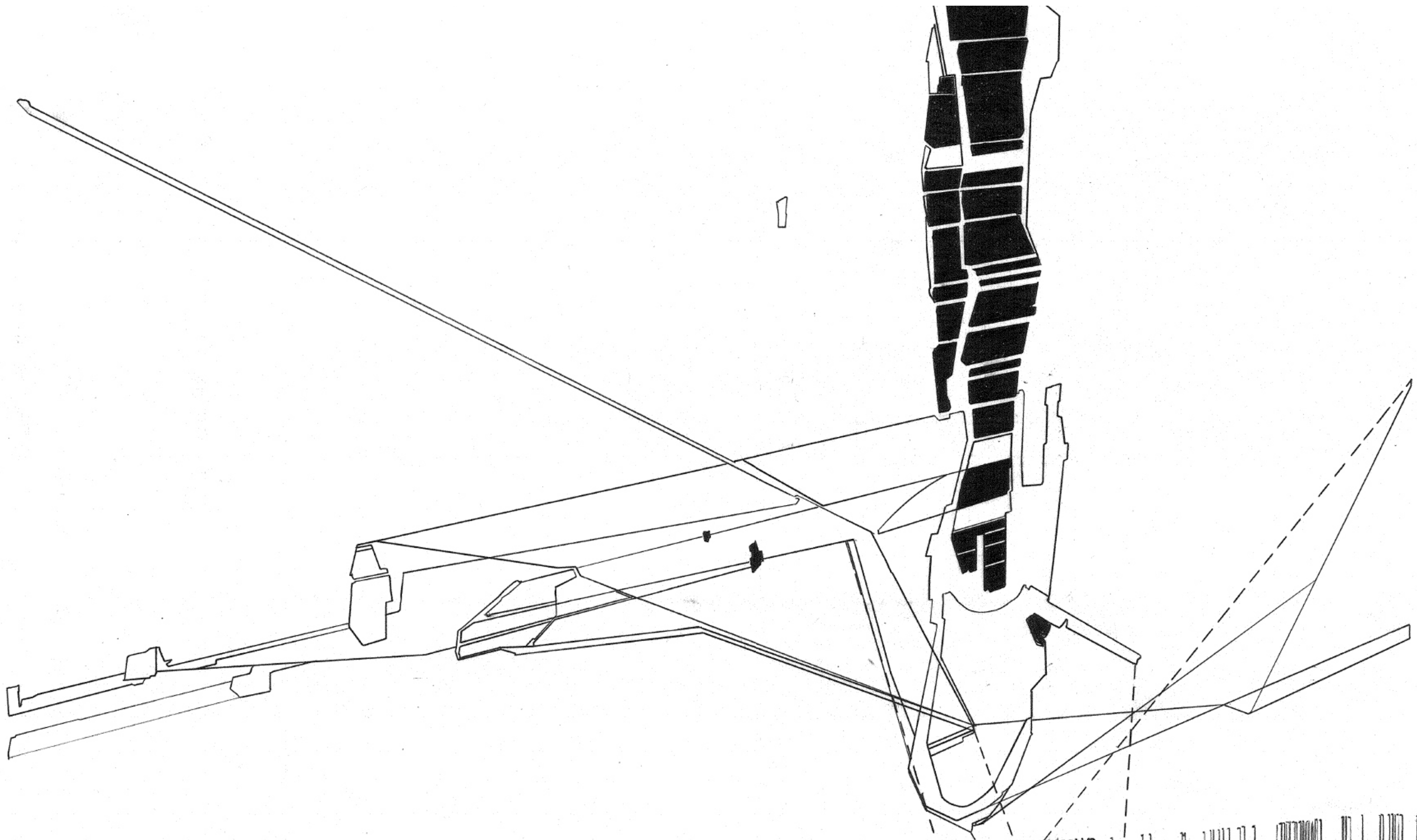
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'Lines Of Resistance', pencil on polyester, 1800mm by 840mm, March 2012





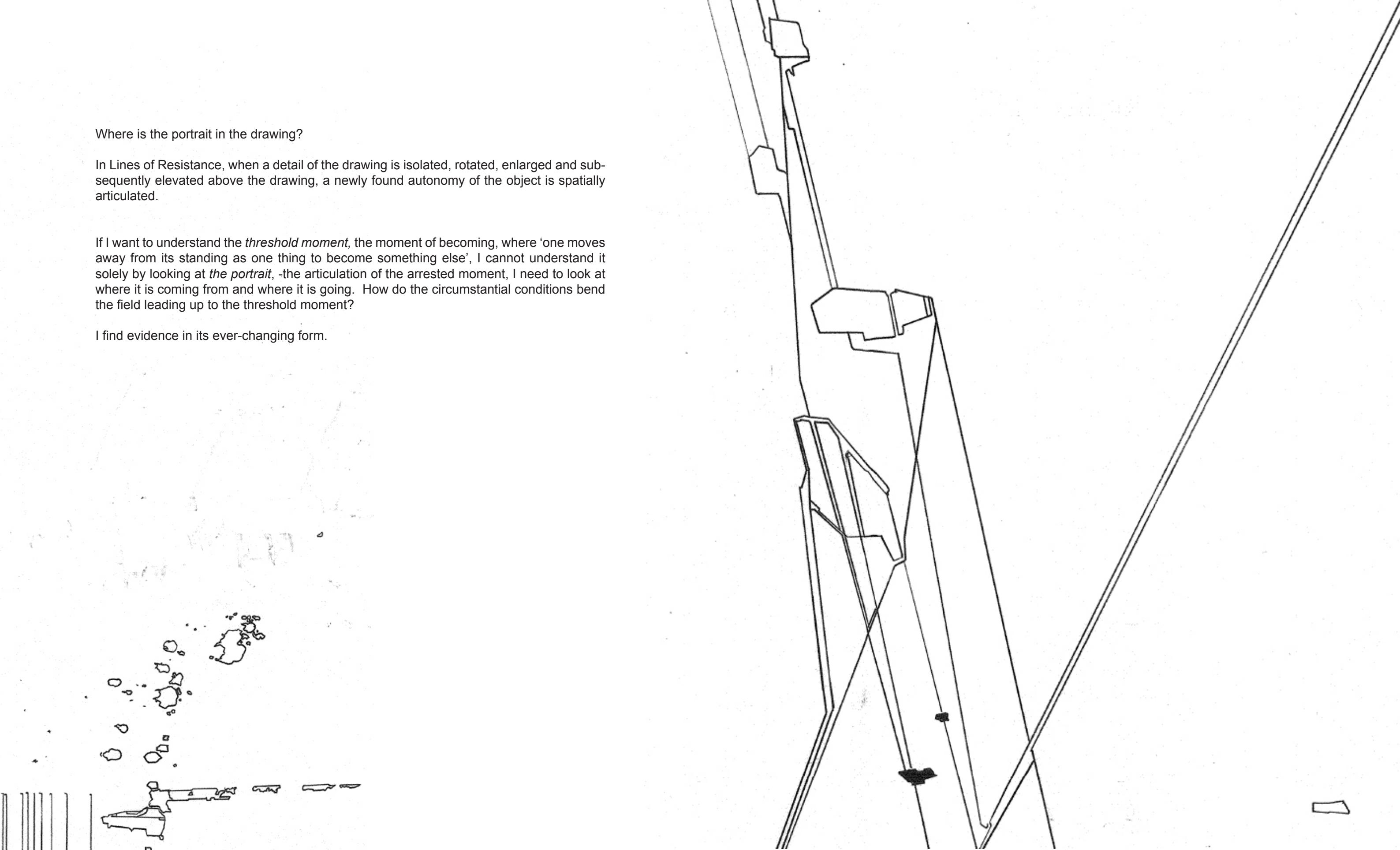


Where is the portrait in the drawing?

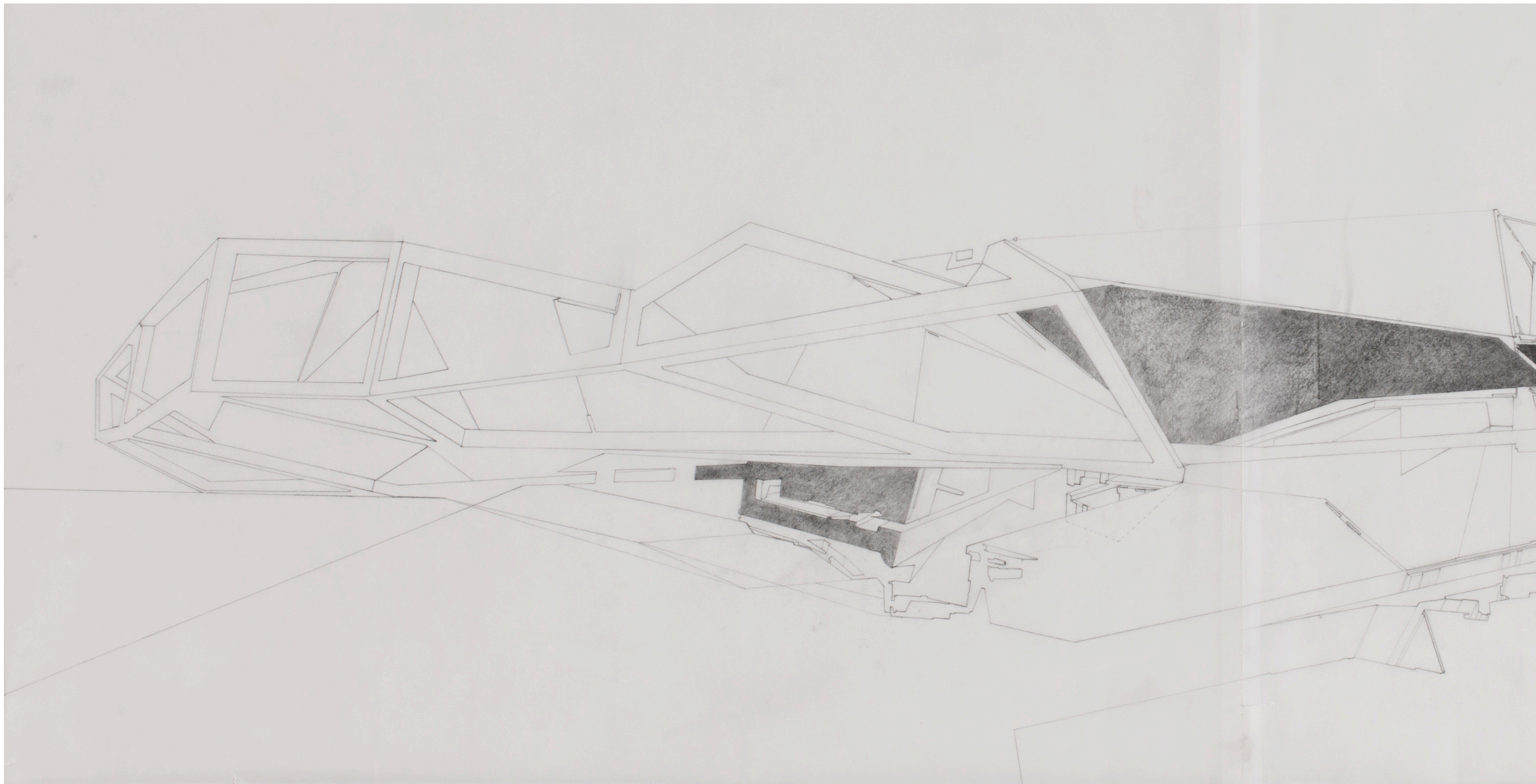
In Lines of Resistance, when a detail of the drawing is isolated, rotated, enlarged and subsequently elevated above the drawing, a newly found autonomy of the object is spatially articulated.

If I want to understand the *threshold moment*, the moment of becoming, where 'one moves away from its standing as one thing to become something else', I cannot understand it solely by looking at *the portrait*, -the articulation of the arrested moment, I need to look at where it is coming from and where it is going. How do the circumstantial conditions bend the field leading up to the threshold moment?

I find evidence in its ever-changing form.









#### Part 4 : The Ground that Speaks of the Figure's Passing

The second contextualisation in regard to Duchamp's painting 'Jeune Homme Triste Dans Un Train';

*'The device is used to integrate the young man with his murky surroundings.'*<sup>[01]</sup>  
In the extreme version of Analytical Cubism, called Hermetic Cubism, the background and foreground are in-distinguishably fused.

The tool to depict the object in this painting is used to express the absolute connection between all elements present in the situation. It is in principle getting rid of the governing dominance of foreground and background (figure and ground). In principle, it removes the filter and categorization of how we structure our observations, and what is seen as important and peripheral. All elements are inextricably connected. It is by observing through drawing the connections between the different elements, that some characteristics are extrapolated, others disappear. In this instance, the status of the object drawn has changed.

*Unfinished drawing* is based on a photograph of an unfinished timber sculpture in the carpenters' workshop. The lines and texture of the sculpture are inextricably connected with the workshop in which the sculpture is crafted and photographed and the workman tools that are lingering around the unfinished object. The drawing investigates authorship of the art work placed central in the photograph the drawing is based on. The drawing investigates also the articulated presence of what is fore-grounded and what is back-grounded, the relationship between the figure and the ground.

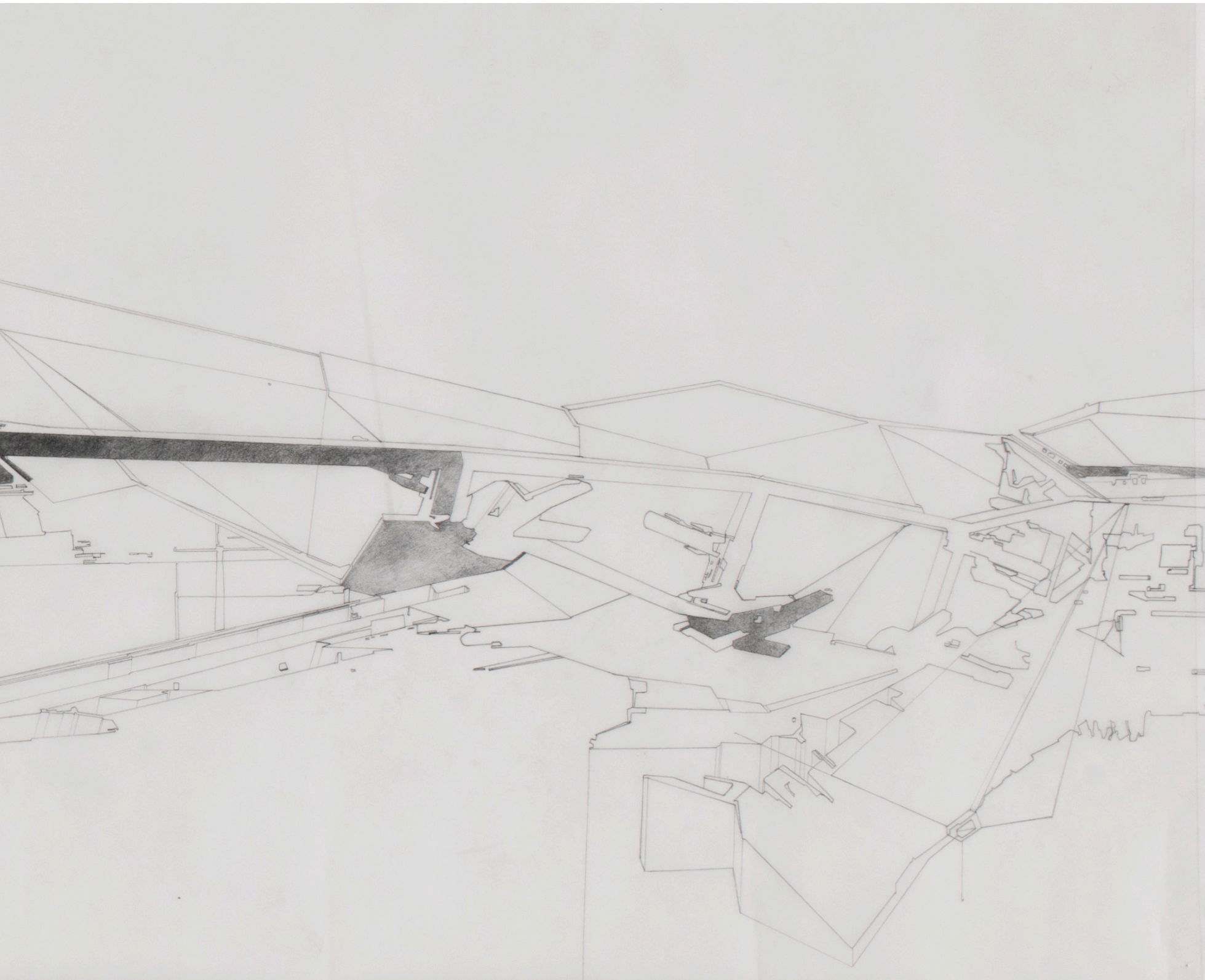
Representations are apprehended as performative in themselves. They are seen as 'doings', active generators of content beyond their representational role. <sup>[02]</sup>

What constitutes foreground and background depends on a point of view. This may be a physical point of view – I stand here and I look in that direction – or may be a point of view that is an opinion about what is perceived. Drawing an object from different point of views in one image, -sometimes only small iterations, allows one to understand what the difference in a view point makes in figure-ground terms. But there is also new information that appears: the drawing with overlapping point of views does not only surrenders information that speaks about the passage of time as one wonders around an object, it also surrenders information about the performative space between the different points of view; the stuff that occurs between the lines; between chosen sequences. That performative space can only be observed and perceived in the drawing, it is not seen in the situation itself. That space becomes visible in and belongs to the drawing space only.

[01] Lucy Flint, *Nude (study)*, *Sad Young Man on a Train*, 1911-12;

<http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artwork/1179>

[02] Dewsbury, et al.2002:438 in reference to non-representational theory, (Trift)



*'Unfinished Drawing'*, pencil on tracing paper 2012; 1188mm by 420mm

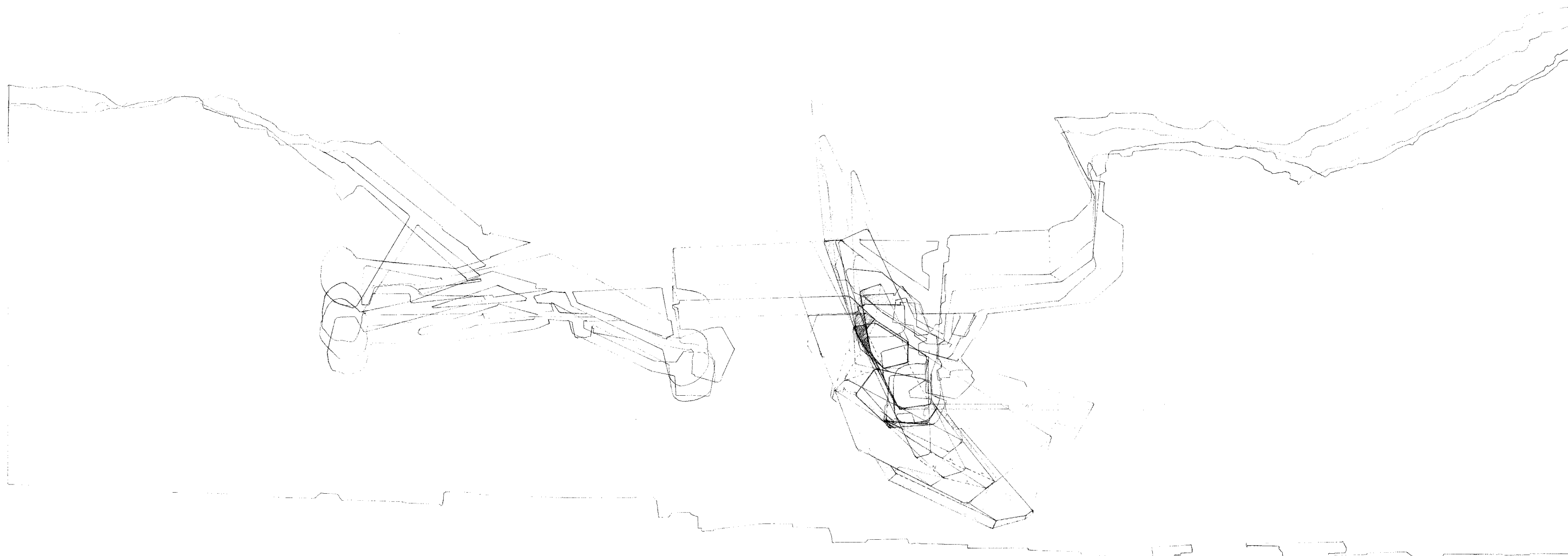












*'Uncommon Ground', pencil on tracing paper, 2011, 1100mm by 780mm*



### Forced form change: Figure Ground Collisions

*The Ground that speaks of the figure's passing*

Impact of external forces onto an object or external forces onto a landscape, the deformation of the field and the object.

### The figure - Ground Relationship Studies;

There is a common configuration in architecture whereby the building -the figure- is placed on the given site (the ground). The relationship between figure and ground is used as a device in the architecture discipline to discuss the relationship of a building towards the ground it is sitting on: traditionally a very fixed relationship. I am interested in the loosened determinacy of the figure and ground that appeared in the 60ties with Superstudio and later in the 70ties with Leon Krier. Also the dismantling or confusion of the figure/ground priority by Eisenman: the displacement of the figure through devices such as folding, the development of the interstitial (between figure and ground) or even the emergence of the 'figure-figure' in the '90 ties. [01]

The Figure Ground studies go in search of the relationship between the figure and the ground to find the performative environment between the two. For me there is no interstitial space Eisenman speaks about [01], ultimately there is only a ground.

I speculate on the situation of a ground formed through the interaction with the figure. In spatial terms, the ground is deformed by the force and impact of the figure; the figure disintegrates through the resistance of the ground. What is left is the ground that speaks of the figure's passing.

The figure is temporal in nature and disappears, the ground remains and acquires a figural nature.

The '*Uncommon Ground*' drawing series attempts to investigate the force field of a collision process between the figure and the ground.

The representational base material narrates the following situation:

The figure (H12 helicopter) crashes with force into the ground (Nevada desert). The ground reforms under the force of the figure and figure absorbs the resistance of the ground.; There is an exchange of forces that has an internal consistency relative to the properties of the figure and the properties of the ground.

In this drawing series I am not only drawing aspects what is visible, but also aspects of what defines the visible.

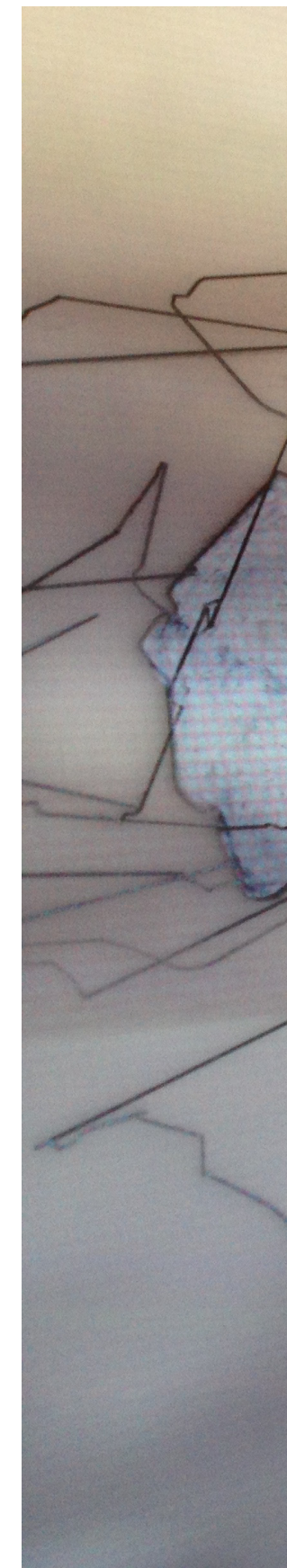
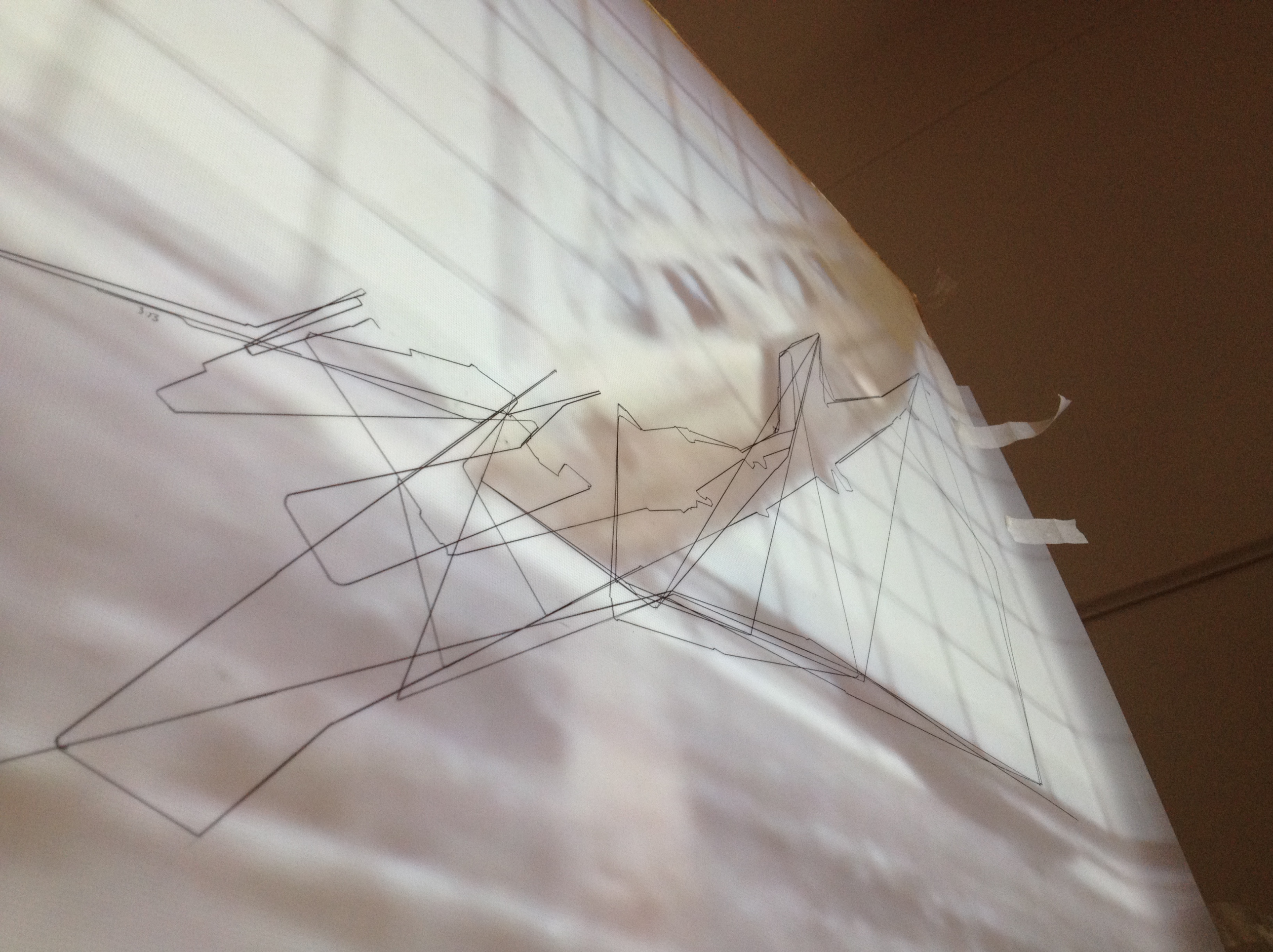


[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDb\\_UCZs7ZM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDb_UCZs7ZM)

Film fragment of 1660s of remote controlled test crash of H12 helicopters. These fragments are used to draw studies of the ground receiving forces and deforming in the process. ('Uncommon Ground' is an example)

[01] Davidson, C, C, (2004) Eisenman/Krier: Two Ideologies, Monacelli Press, Inc, New York & Yale University School of Architecture.









## Part 4 : The Ground that speaks of the figure's passing

### The Uncommon Ground

The 'Un-common Ground' drawing series, investigates aspects of Figure-Ground collision. The Figure, being the object that stands at the centre of the attention and the ground being the supporting background.

Quite literally here in the drawings, the moving object is projected onto a drawing board and I draw to understand how the ground receives the tension and force of the figure. The figure disintegrates to serve the form finding process of the ground resulting not in a Figure-Ground reversal, but in a **Figured Ground**.

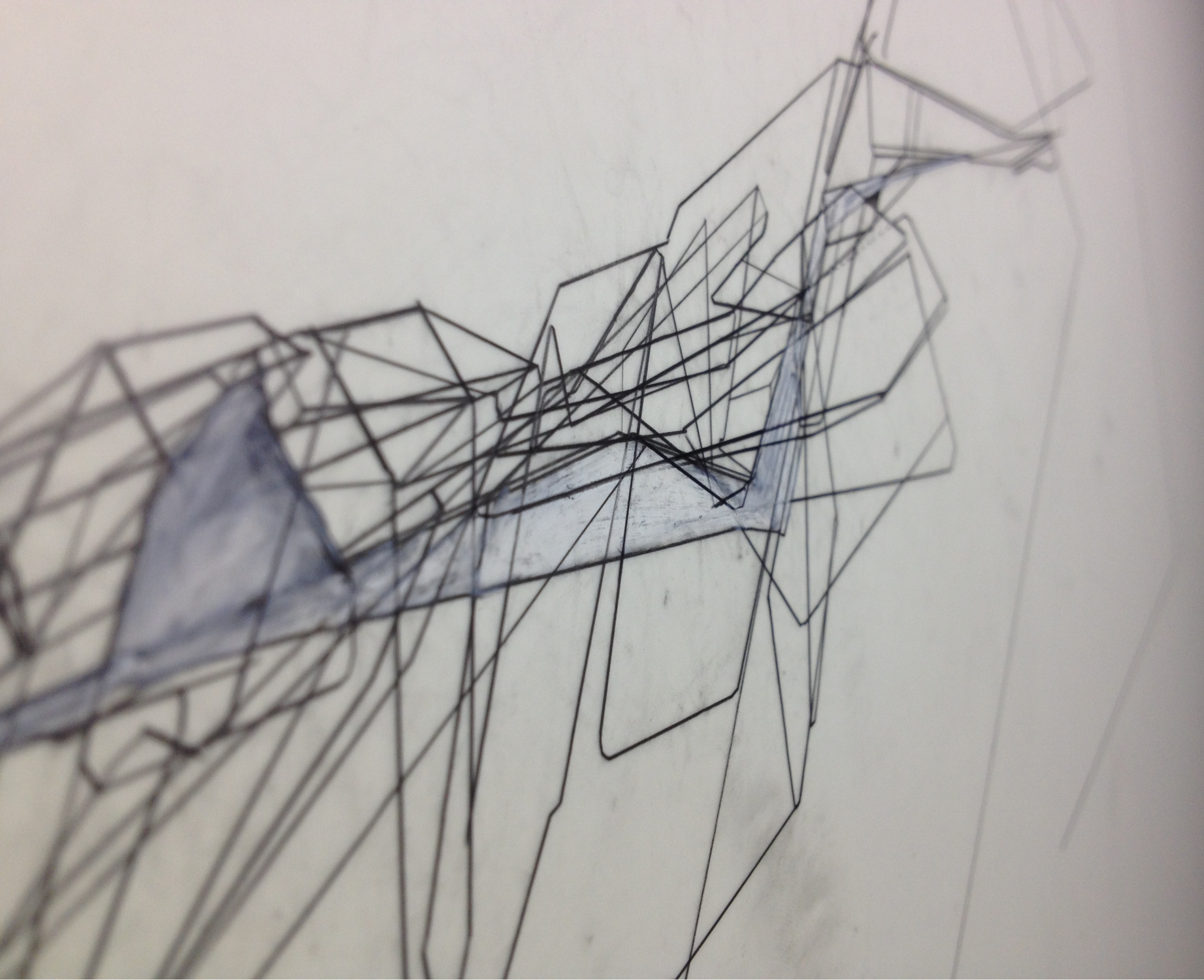
What is left is Ground that speaks of the Figure's passing.

### Scale and Nature

The scale of the drawing changes during the drawing process together with the nature of the drawing. As I start tracing information from representational material (film fragments of the situation) the drawing is scaled to a relevant size and thus has a scale.

When I pull the drawing away from the projected figurative representation, the drawing sheds its scale and figurative nature and the drawing becomes scale 1:1 with a figural nature.

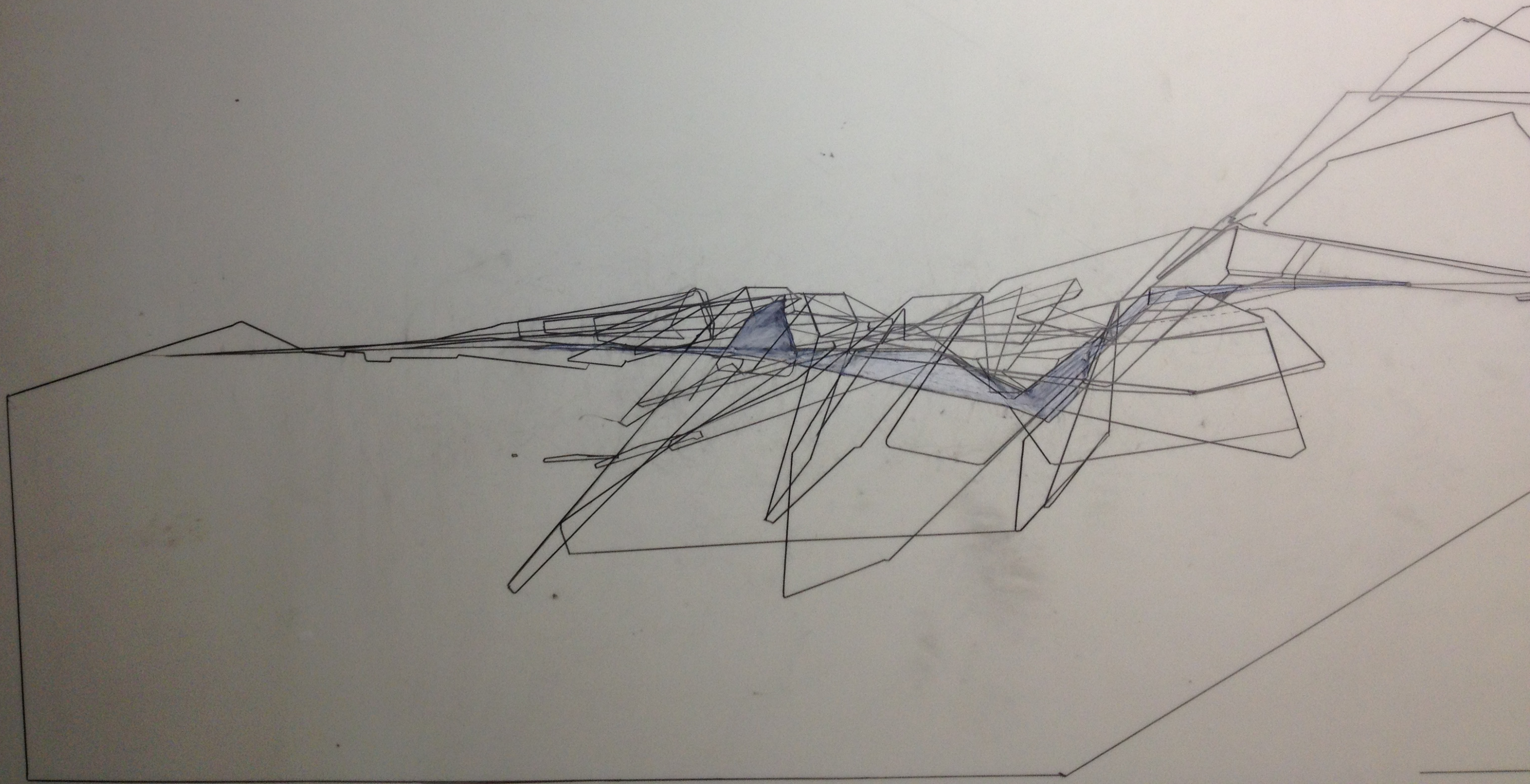




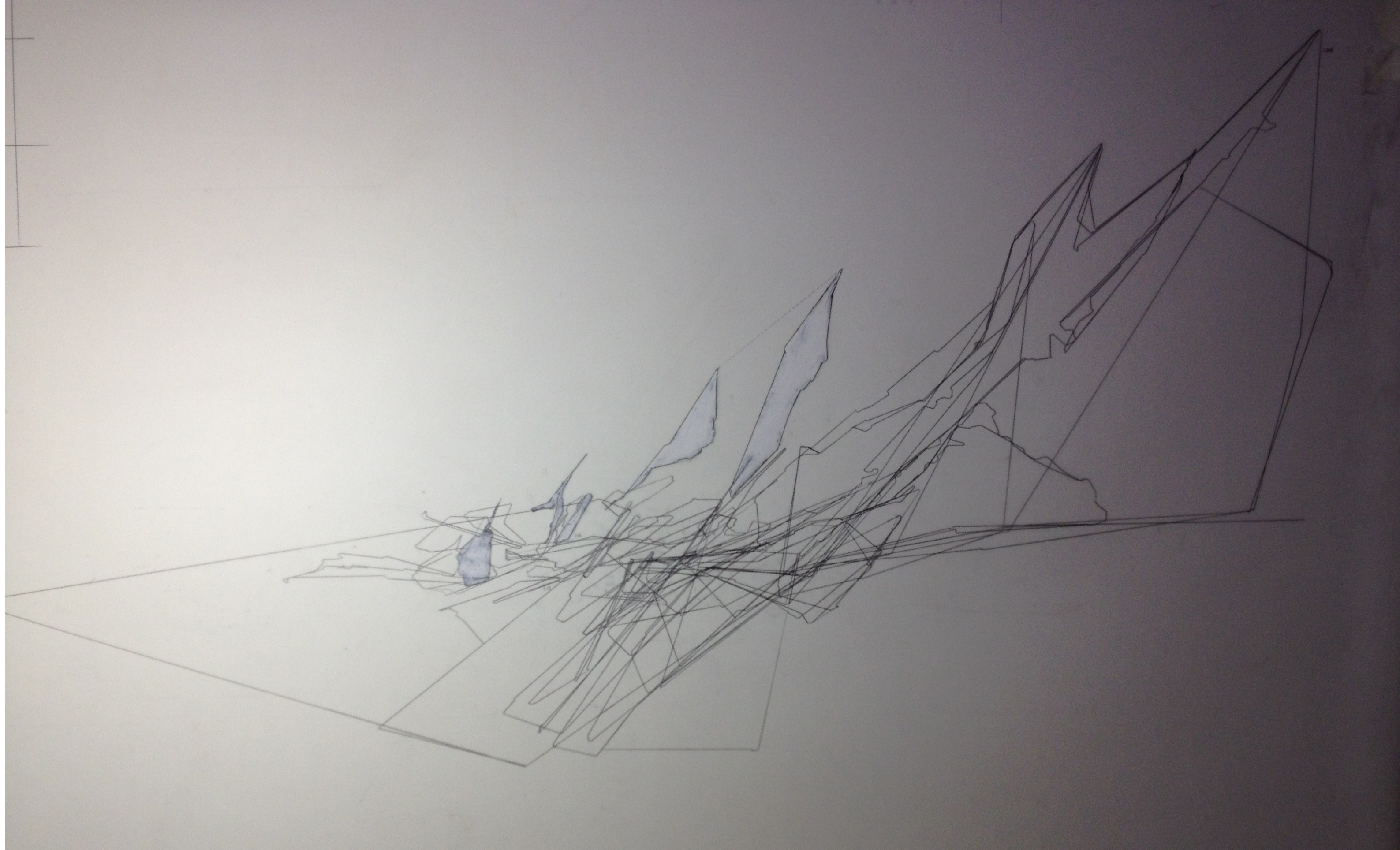
The traced representational base material (the film fragment) is figurative in nature and quality. It narrates something about an object or situation: the film holds all selected observed information that the object surrenders during the drawing process from the different point of views of the film frames.

The work is figurative at that point in time, it represents observed aspects of the *real*.











### **From Figurative to Figural**

The change in nature of the drawing.

The reworking of the traced information becomes autonomous and includes degrees of the non-representational. It is finding a way to somewhere else. The figure remains in some form, though freed from its figurative task.

What remains is a drawing that does not represent, but that has presence.  
-A figural presence.

### **The status of the Figure**

I am still in search of this fleeing figure.

That figure that shapes the ground.

There is a progress towards the change of the nature of the figure in an investigation of the work of Marc Godts (artist): a set of drawings called '*Artist imbalance: the space between his head and his two hands*'.

Resisting the representational while looking at the figural; the figure disintegrates to serve the form finding of the ground. The figure slowly moves towards a living body. A body that has internal forces, actions and thoughts of its own. A body that does not define itself though it's properties and physical appearance only. The relationship of such a body towards it's context is much more complex and cannot be addressed only by mechanical notation. One needs to devise new modes of mediating/noting the force exchange between the figure and the ground.







Concluding Notes

With these concluding notes I would like to elaborate on the shifts that took place in my practice as a direct result of the particular process of this particular doctorate.

The process of the PhD allowed me to vacate space in my practice for and give me critical audience to an aspect of my work that was side-lined by a commercial practice: drawing. During the PhD, drawing developed as an introspective practice and shifts started occurring in both the drawn and built practice. As a result I became aware of a better understanding of my practice as a whole.

I would like to outline 4 important shifts that took place during the PhD:

**(1) The shift in how I perceive the relationship between the different aspects of the practice. (building, drawing and teaching practice)**

What the relationship between my (commercial) building practice and my introspective drawing practice is, has been a question that kept me occupied for a long time in the process of the PhD. This question ushered a period of turmoil half way through the PhD, questioning the position of the separate components (building, drawing and teaching) of my practice. The question for a long time implied for me that the relevance of the drawing practice needed to be found in the building practice. It seemed that the drawing practice could not exist on its own in parallel to the building practice, as if it had a responsibility towards something other beyond the development of quality within its own spatial territory. Even when Raimund Abraham said “When I draw, the drawing is not a step toward the built but an autonomous reality that I try to anticipate” [01], he seemed to have felt the necessity to clarify that the drawing can operate in a parallel world, different from its service to the build world. Maybe it’s necessary to note that it is partly due to the medium’s history not only as a representational medium but also as preparatory means, as a foundation for artistic practices. [02]

Having the opportunity to build something is a fantastic form of ‘bringing forth’. The construction of an edifice has its own particular procedures and pragmatics which involves drawing in more than one role, and is a way to further the resolution of a constructive responds. But it is certainly not a medium that goes beyond what drawings can do to further ideas and ultimately the discipline of Architecture. There is no hierarchy that places building a building in a more advanced position than the development of a drawing.

It has however proofed invaluable to have these two modes of practice running in parallel as they both have their own territories for testing. But one clearly does not stand in service of the other, rather as I came to discover, the drawing practice started to drive the building practice.

**(2) The shift in the Process**

The drawing practice has intensely developed over the period of the PhD to a level where I realized for the first time that the drawing was drawn for the purpose of nothing else but the drawing itself. Its intelligence and relevance was exclusively self-referential. For the first time I could feel the potential it released by letting go of the burden of the drawing’s functionality. And the role that the drawing practice could have as a basis for other aspects of the practice. Ultimately, very much as I describe the process of the drawing series: The drawing practice reached a threshold moment where it shed its representational role and it could thrive as an autonomous medium. As such, the drawing practice was left in a position to develop in direct relationship with its own interests. Subsequently the drawing practice engaged itself again and was brought in to drive the development of the representational, to a level it was never able to reach before.

The process of the PhD has propelled a process where the drawing practice was driven to evolve from a representational mode to an autonomous mode in which it could be developed to be brought back not to serve but to drive the speculative aspects of the practice.

This new found tool of the autonomous drawing has opened up new ways of working and new ways of talking about the drawing and building practice.

**(3) The shift in the resolution of the observed**

Due to the shift in process and the tools I developed in the drawing practice, the way I engage with available information in a project has drastically intensified. By singling out the observational phase in drawing projects, I have realized the depth of that field. I know how and where to scratch the surface to find embedded resolution. Seeing the resolution of the observed is important as it is the foundation of any speculation. Let me explain this further in shift number four: the understanding of technique.







#### (4) Shift in the understanding of technique

The process of the PhD accommodated awareness for the procedure used in spatial practice. Most of those procedures are tacit understandings of how to do something. First of all, awareness of and understanding the tacit aspects of the practice opened up ways to hone in and ground (de-mystify) those ways of doing things. Secondly being able to identify the (sometimes hidden) tools I am using and understanding the relationship between them sharpens understanding of the whole procedure. Once a certain level of understanding had presented itself, I could direct the process and with it the projects insightfully. I expand the definition of technique in the relationship between tacit knowledge and a project's poiesis. Let me contextualise the above in my work;

Lebbeus Wood's work is described by BLDBLG as "fiction becomes reflection; archaeology becomes an unpredictable form of projective technology" [03], quite an interesting statement that I can strongly relate to: archeology as projective technology; digging in existing remains as a technique to speculate. The word technology is well chosen in this context, originating from the Greek Technê. The word Technê as its history of meaning involves the term tacit knowledge in relation to poiesis.[04]

Dustin Cohen of Cybject has some interesting notes on the matter I'd like to share: "Technê, for the ancient Greeks, was a knowing how to reveal things hitherto in concealment into un-concealment." This, in Heideggers' poiesis as a 'bringing-forth', refers to some form of making that arises from being conscious of the inner nature of materials. This consciousness is arrived at by habitually working with the materials." [05]

I understand the above as the bringing-forth of a project that is enforced or compelled by a consciousness of the tacit understanding of the project's context.

The above argues tacit knowledge in direct relation to poiesis, the moment of becoming: tacit knowledge of the observed used as a technique enabling an entry point in its speculative environment. Tacit understanding is defined here as a technique. I'd like to bring the above in relation to how the projects I present in this document uncover an awareness of and investigate acts of design in-between observing, registering and representation.

That in-between area, between observation and what one does with this observation is an important awareness if one is concerned with 'Locum'. I am not even talking about the Genius Loci, just Locum. Place. 'What makes this place? What is this context I am looking at?' are crucial questions to scrutinize in whatever capacity you (architect, artist, urban planner...) are to respond to a place. One can only respond relevantly to a place-situation when understanding the value of context and where that value presents itself. What I state here is the importance of context. What I would like to express in this document goes much further.

I am looking for ways to engage with this context in a manner which does not reduce the complexity of what is present and enables a tacit understanding of what is present. The reason why is that I believe that by engaging comprehensively with what is present, one trespasses beyond what is visible and arrives in a speculative, performative environment that propels one's spatial intelligence necessary to respond.

In the first chapter of this document I state that *drawing is a way to spend time with the object or subject* to acquire that valuable tacit understanding. I would like to exemplify this with the work of Vija Celmins. I didn't know Celmins till someone gave her as a reference to me after I spoke about drawing being a way to spend time with something. Incredible and intriguing examples of her work are the *Big Sea* drawings. They are pencil drawn views of the surface of the sea, and took more than a year to complete. The drawings are a compelling familiar image of waves; they are so intensely familiar that they go beyond the representational: they present the thing that makes you stare at the sea. Celmins engulfed herself and subsequently the drawing with the specificity of the sea waves to a degree that she is able to draw the thing that hypnotizes you when looking at the sea. She herself comments in self-criticism that some of those drawings are so intense that they do not allow anyone in. These drawings go that far that there is no space for the observer to project, think or speculate when observing the drawing. If I may refer to the performative space between her observation and the representation of that observation, the distance between the two seems short in this instance. That short that the nature of the drawing presents something, instead of representing. The drawing presents the thing that makes you stare at the sea. – Incredible.

In the performative environment between you and the context you are looking at, is where this speculation occurs. Exactly where you want it to appear: deeply rooted in the observed context and deeply rooted in your ability to understand its relevance.

That moment of appearance I refer to as the non-representational moment in the drawing. I refer not to an actual thought, but to what has been drawn: the poiesis of a project, referred to in the text as in Heidegger's reference to poiesis as a 'bringing-forth' when something that represents something moves away from its standing as one thing to become something else.

[01]Raimund Abraham interview by Carlos Brillembourg, Bomb magazine, Fall 2001[2] Walkerm J.F; Duff, L; Daviesm J (2005). "Old Manuals and New pencils" Drawing- The Process. Bristol: Intellect Books.

[03] <http://bldgblog.blogspot.be/2007/10/without-walls-interview-with-lebbeus>

[04] Carl Mitcham, 'Philosophical Questions about Technê', chapter five, Thinking through Technology: The path between Engineering and Philosophy, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994

[05]Some Notes on Heidegger's Question Concerning Technology (Ancient Technê and Modern Technology; Dustin Cohen, Cybject; March 2010).







In Conclusion;

The autonomous drawing practice is an important tool to first of all scrutinize the context that we observe around us, secondly to scrutinize the spatial practice as a whole and thirdly to gain tacit understanding leading to the ‘bringing-forth’ or poiesis of a project.

These drawings are in fact every time a reassessment of how and what it is that I investigate when I act in this speculative world of design.

In this PhD, I have been investigating what I am drawing, contextualising this with what I know, and annotating the drawings with a body of text clarifying the research to the reader. As much as this thesis is about the performative nature of drawing, annotating the drawings as part of the process of putting together this durable record has proven to be performative in itself.

I would like to fold this crystallised understanding into a drawing process in the coming two months to present this understanding through the production of a new drawing during my examination in conclusion of this PhD.

Riet Eeckhout







RMIT University · School of Architecture & Design

# DESIGN. PRACTICE. RESEARCH

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28.11.2014

PhD Completions by  
Tanya Kalinina @ 10.00am  
James McAdam @ 13.30pm  
Riet Eeckhout @ 16.30 pm

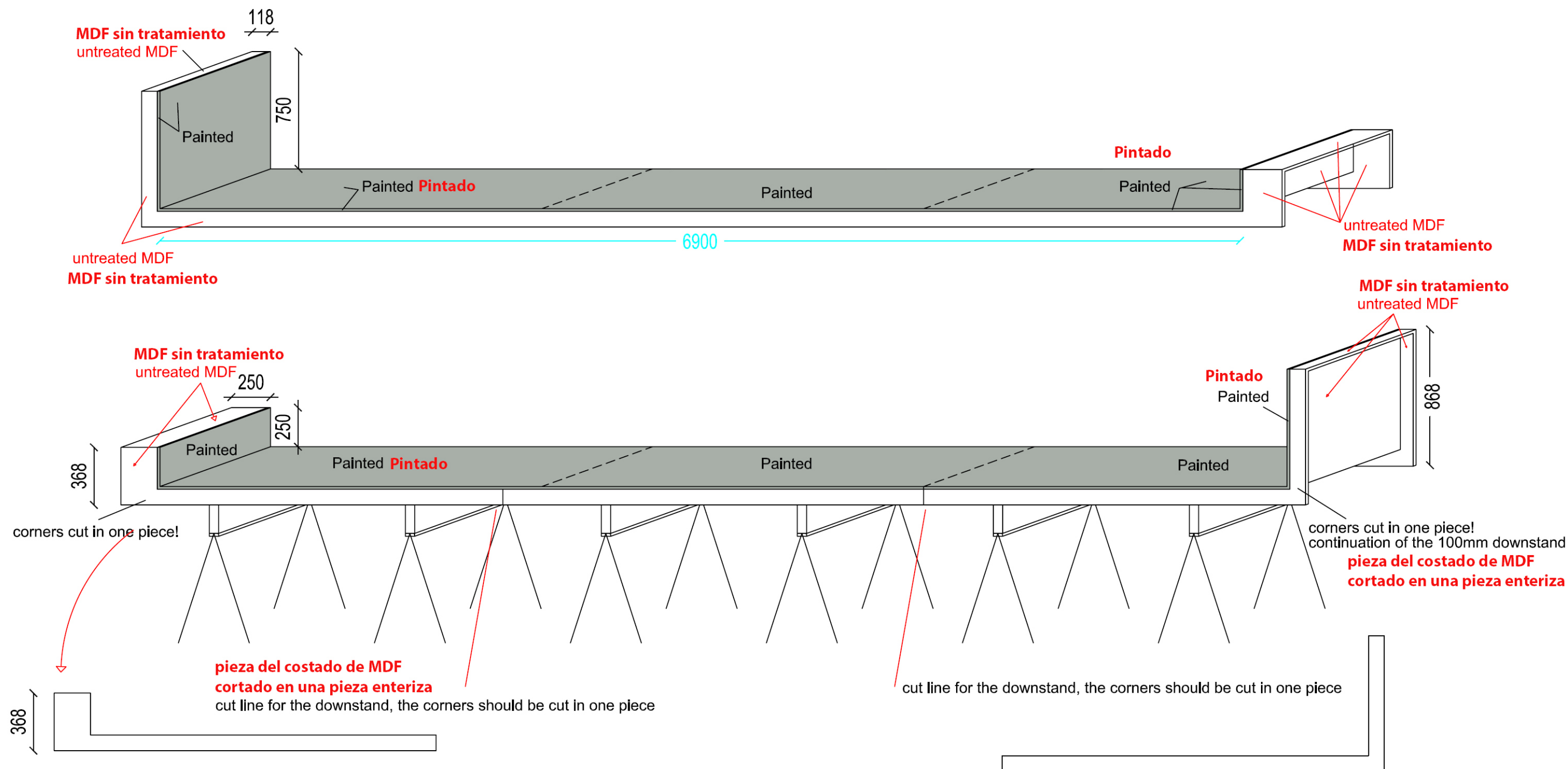
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Plaça Nova, 5 - Barcelona  
[www.adapt-r.eu](http://www.adapt-r.eu)

## The Exhibition

The exhibition and doctoral defence took place on the 28th of November 2014 at the gallery space of COAC in Barcelona.

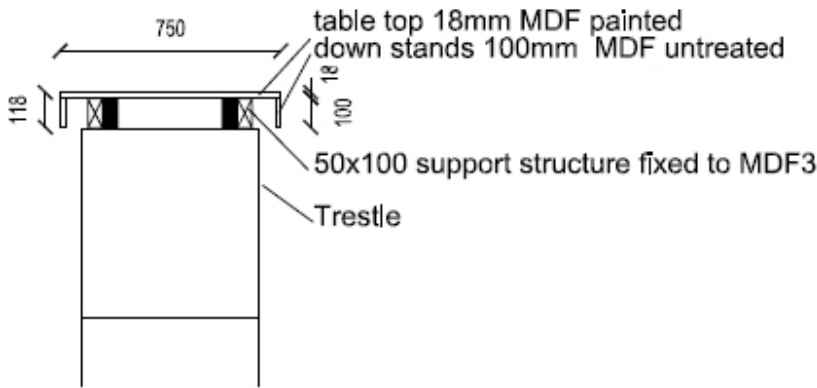
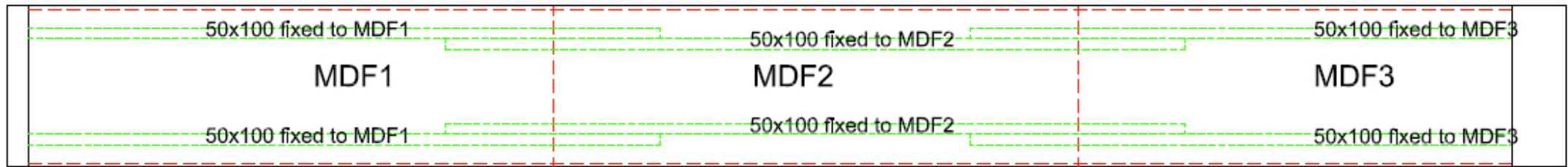
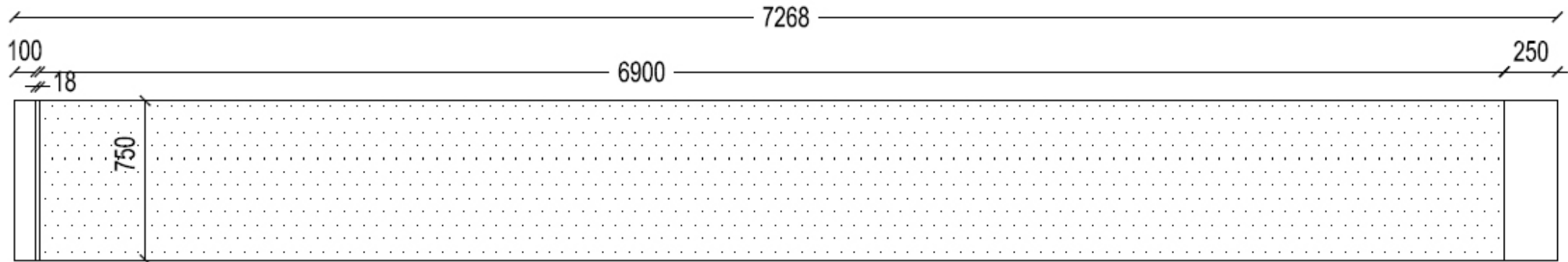
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Plaça Nova, 5, 08002 Barcelona, Spain



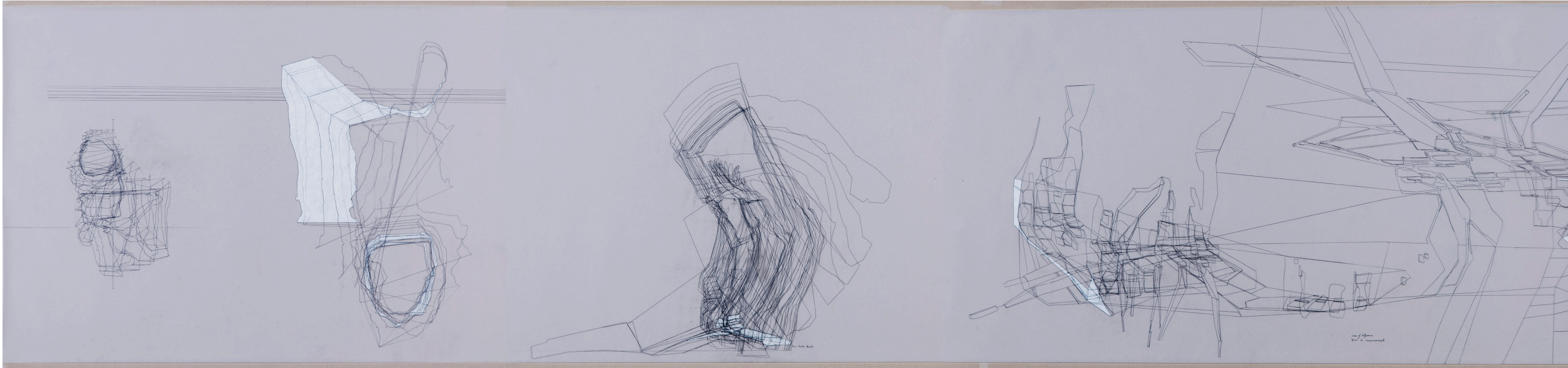




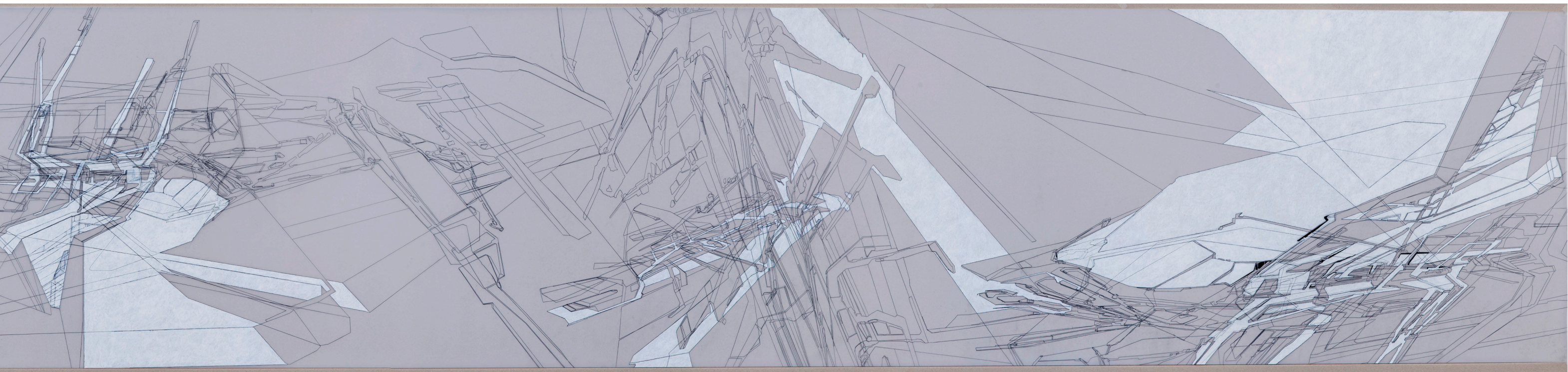
The exhibition consists of a precisely scaled timber table measuring 7268mm by 750mm. The table incorporates a surface where drawings are laid on and two up stands on either side. One up stand supports a projector and the up stand on the other side of the table operates as a projection screen. The projector projects the film fragment the drawings are based on.











*'The Space Between His Head and his Two hands'*, November 2014, 6900mm by 750mm, pencil and China marker on Polyester, a dialogical project with architect and artist Marc Godts. Photo by Michael Delausnay





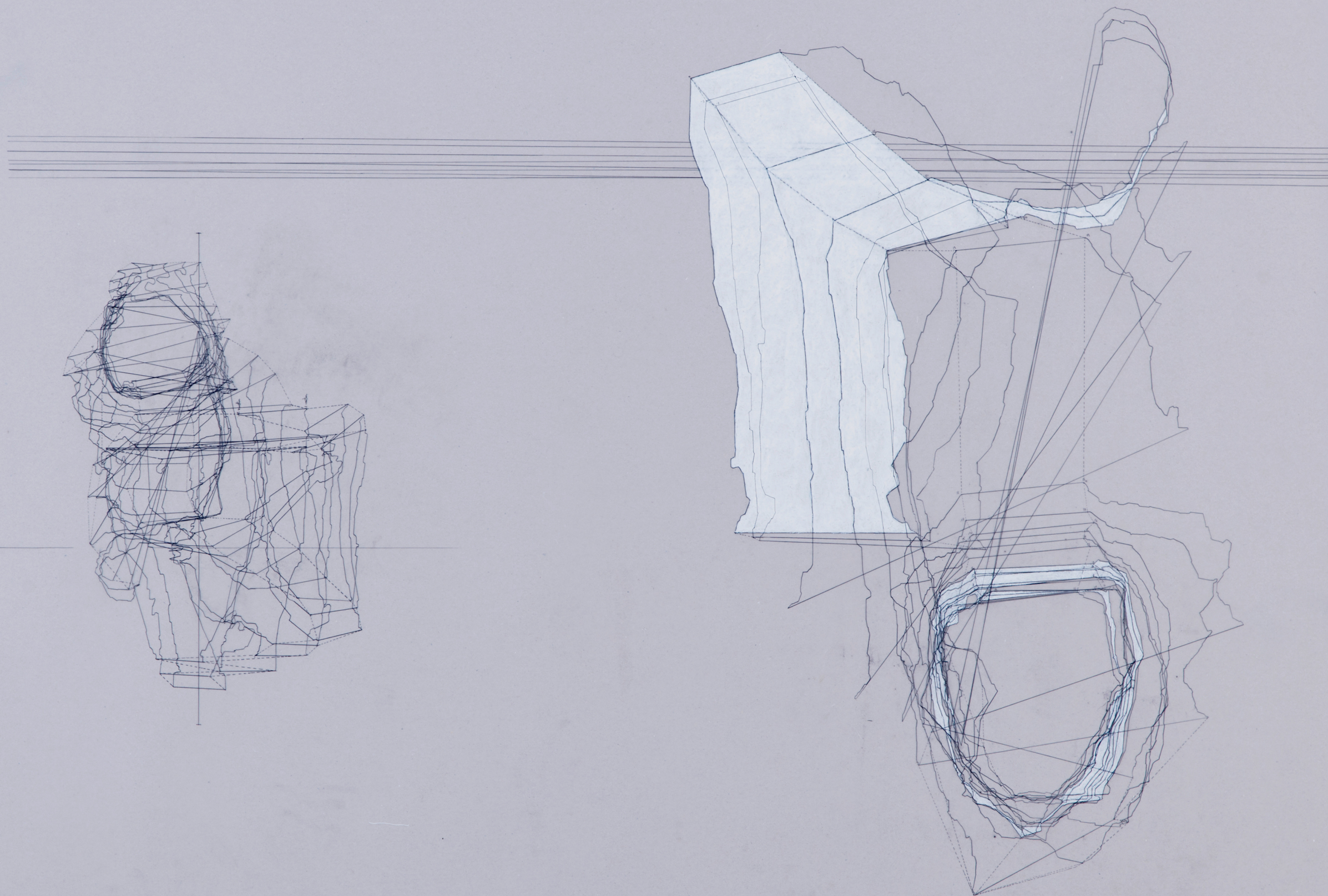


The following pages include enlargements of the drawing parts accompanied by the notes and structure of the examination presentation.

The PhD was examined by a panel of 3 professors:

- Professor Dr. Brandon W Joseph; Frank Gallipoli Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art, Columbia University, New York.
- Professor Dr. Nad Chard, Bartlett University London (UCL), Professor of Experimental Architecture
- Professor Dr. Kester Rattenbury, Westminster University, London







Process Drawing

This PhD is about the Performative Nature of Drawing

and it's relationship to the production of spatial content.  
in the space of the drawing or as a physical construct

What I came to understand:

Before going through this particular PhD process, I had very little vocabulary to talk about this practice. Except for a few terms or phrases that I used to describe it all.

These terms have evolved and nurtured an understanding over the past 4 years through the PhD. The PhD enabled me to understand and structure them in relation to the spatial content produced (in the space of the drawing and build work), and communicate them to others.

This drawing I present here is the work of the past 2 months  
I've selected 6 terms that I would like to explain in the next hour as a tool

One of these phrases is:

Stepping in and out of the drawing.

This phrase is very much of value for me as it grounds the basic way in which I produce spatial content.

When stepping into the drawing there is a surrender to the process of drawing where the drafter becomes subject to the action.

And there is a stepping out of that process to reflect and to take a distance to bring the produced in relation to other things.

Both phases in this process are performative in nature but operate in very different environments.

It is the alternating between both that generates an understanding of the work produced.

Writing the research document was stepping out of the drawing.

The language I speak and write is a different language than what lays on the table.

When I step in the drawing, there is the language of the line, surface, tensioned proximity, impetus,..

When I step out of the drawing, words try to come as close as possible to the language of the drawing, but with an inevitable inadequacy.

There are 3 components to this examination,

(1) The catalogue has all the research work and reflections on the work of the past 4 years, (hand out the document)

(2) The exhibition has the work of the past 2 months. (still residing into the drawing)

(3) 'The presentation' I would like to handle as a mediation between the two.

Drawing

The language used in this PhD is the language of drawing. PhD by drawing.

I use drawing to think.

This research is conducted through drawing. I explore and reflect on subjects through observational hand drawings. Drawing is used as a research tool for exploration and reflection.

Drawing is used as a generative tool, not a mere representational one.

I use hand drawing to spend time with something – to observe and absorb

I observe by re-drawing or tracing selections of what is visible of the subject.

be it a site, a situation or an object.

I use hand drawing to engage with the complexity of what it is that I think I see.

Through hand drawing, I can speculate on the nature of an object or subject and activate and curate my interests within the complexity of what is visible. (I choose aspects of what I see to activate my interests)

I speak about what I know; I draw what I cannot speak about just yet.

I draw what I cannot speak about just yet. When that drawing is finished, I step back and I relate what I understand of it to what i know.

This is what the process of this PhD has been, stepping in and out of the drawing.

Process Drawing

Process Drawing is a verb in the present continuous.

Process Drawing, is an action undertaken in the here and now. (it finds its benefits in the action)

The surrender to the process of the drawing.

It refers to a drawing process that is generative and process-driven in nature and is used as a tool to observe and to speculate on spatial content.

This aspect of my practice developed from observational hand drawing with an awareness of the subjectivity of the standpoint, to an investigation that explores the ambiguity of what is to be seen and how I represent those observations.

I started this project with architect and artist, Marc Godts, just after finishing the ADR in September. I wanted to fold the reflections after writing the PhD into a drawing process for this presentation.

the different phases in the drawing process

set up

information collection

observation through drawing

establishing content (space between two hands)

I would like to take you through 6 terms or phrases that embody important aspects of my practice and embody my thinking within the discipline of architecture.

- in pursuit of augmented observation towards a tacit understanding of the complexity of the specific

Augmented observation through a slowness, through enlargement, through isolation, through defamiliarisation, through repetition and iteration.

The complexity of the specific. I have an incredible affinity for the complexity of the specific. An affinity for everything we omit when we make an abstraction of the abundance of information that presents us in any situation.

I enforce an augmented observation in an attempt to get a tacit understanding of this complexity.

- In pursuit of devices that bypass reductive acts of the categorical mind in the design process,

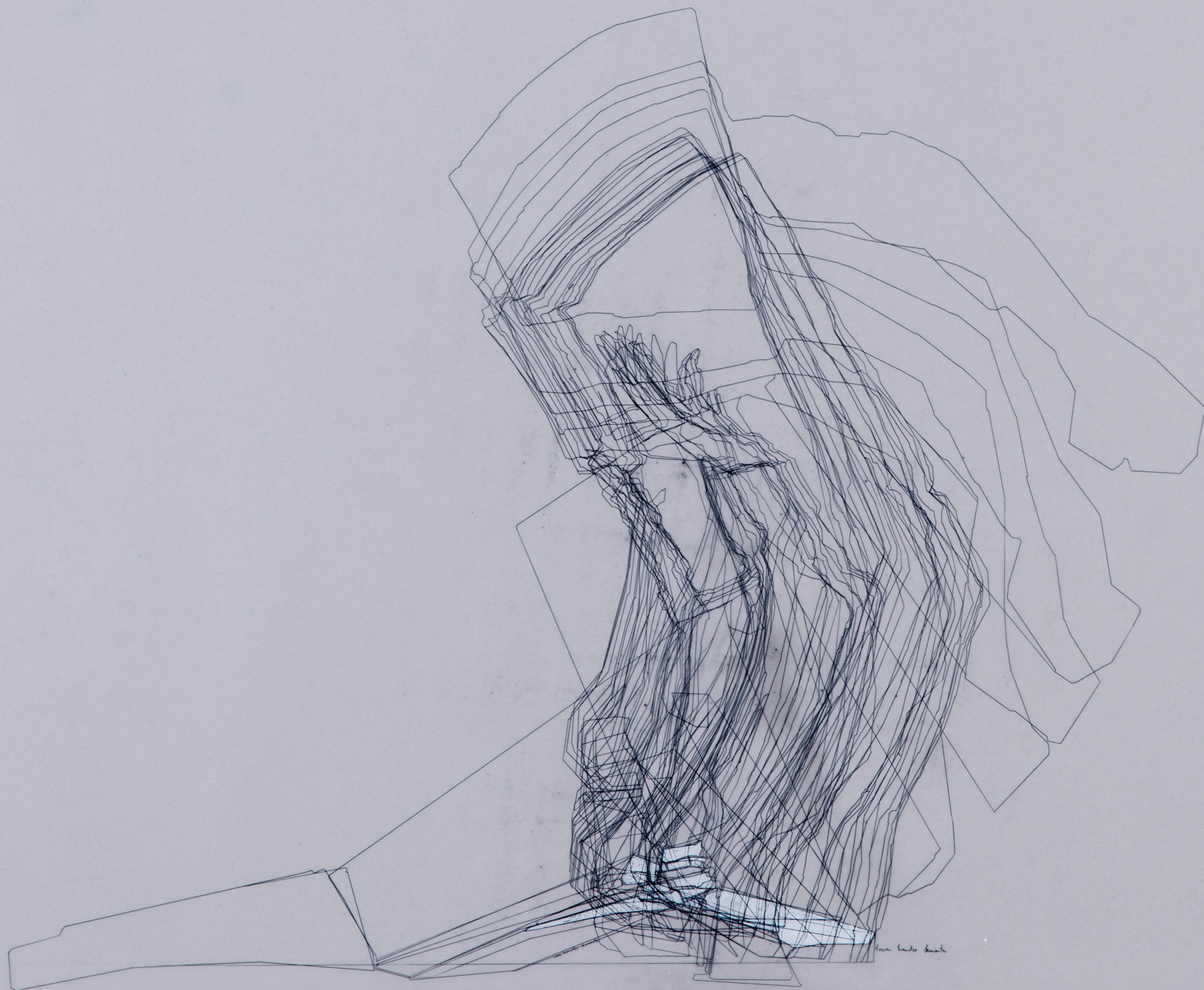
The categorical mind is the mind that makes abstraction the complexity of the specific.

We decide quite fast what is foreground and what is background, what is important and what is peripheral, we decide quite fast what it is that we see and how we should handle it.

- In Pursuit of a practice of resistant spatial content,

Spatial content that sticks





from the series



(1) The field drawing is the term I use for my drawings- In ref. to what Stan Allan describes as a bottom up phenomena, defined not by over arching geometrical schemas but by intricate local connections. In this instance, form matters, but not so much the forms of things as the forms between things

I consider my drawings as sites, sites of investigation.

In my observational drawings I collect information I deem relevant through tracing. and I let these picked up elements perform in their relation to each other.

Ideas or observations transfer from invisible to visible through the language of point, line, surface and volume.

I consider the field drawing, the expanded definition of the site drawing. in this field drawing, there are no strict notational or scale agreements. What matters is the inter-relationship between elements. And the basic premise of how one element gives rise to the other.

(I used to refer to my architectural drawings of buildings and master plans as relational environments, environments where spatial information finds a position towards one n other. A composition of data. Data embedded within the line.

(2) The circumstantial situation and the complexity of the specific

The main driver is behind the urge to engage with the complexity of the specific is that A design process can be such a reductive act.

I see a situation i am interested in and I am calling it a site.

The demolition of an architrave, helicopter test crashes, photographs of objects or someone else' drawing, a carpenter's workshop.

This site is not restricted to a place, nor a fixed time, it doesn't have fixed ingredients, it is a situation where circumstantial information lingers the field, and I start to explore.

#### GO TO PROJECTION AREA

I see a situation I am interested in and enlarge it to see it better; I enlarge it to the point where i can see the grain of the representation, the grain of the immediate. (as immediate as a representation can get)

The edge of the representation, I am looking at the boundary of the capacity of the representation. to be able to observe it in all of its capacity

#### POINT AT FIRST TWO DRAWINGS

I enlarge it; I sit at the pixel end of the representation and trace it. I isolate myself with the data and surrender. I am tracing boundaries of what is visible. I trace boundaries of what defines the visible. (Forces or impetus of visual information, drivers that influence spatial disposition)

I regularly work with film as base material. Sitting at the pixel end of the image, film surrenders an abundance of information (in static terms, at for example 25 frames per second). It surrenders information about subjects from different point of views as the camera slides around.

The observational hand drawing engages with what is visible in the medium of the representation. The representation is selectively traced and processed through the hand.

The hand drawing engages with the represented information to a degree that aspects of the representation come to a point, -a pivotal point -where the drawing starts to perform in a speculative way.

This pivotal point is a threshold moment in the drawing process, Very much as in Heidegger's reference to poiesis as a bringing-forth'.

When something moves away from its standing as one thing to become something else.

There is aspects of this in every drawing, and also in the overall drawing process.

That moment is what i like to refer to as the 'non-representational moment, the moment of becoming. The moment the observed presents itself and is not merely represented.

#### (3) Point of view

The notion of Point of view relates to the stand point. I am looking at an object from where I stand. From different point of views, the object i am looking at releases different information or information of a different nature.

The notion of point of view in the drawing has its origins in the drawing research through the urge to want to rotate objects in the drawing in an attempt to release the hidden resolution of the object. -in search of what lays beyond the surface of the representation.

point of view is how you address an object and how an object addresses you.

Point of view mediates between the observer and the observed, capturing the performative space in-between the observer and observed, between the drawing and the drawn object (its representation)

The aspect of point of view and its capacity to activate the performative environment between the observer and the observed particularly interests me. It is in this 'space' that I want speculation to happen: the performative space between me and what it is I am looking at.

Point of views are entry points into the drawing space, they are entry points when I draw, and entry points when one reads the drawing.

The research is based on a search for the spatial content of a site, situation or event whereby these self-initiated projects outline a consistency that is particular, and is based on the subjectivity and ambiguity of critical observation.

It prompts questions: What is it that I see? What do I filter and register of what is observed? What is my standpoint and how does it relate to the observed object? Process drawing takes the questioning to a level where the relationship between observed and observer becomes performative or speculative.

Here, the act of design is deeply entrenched in the complexity of a specific situation and deeply entrenched in my ability to understand its relevance.

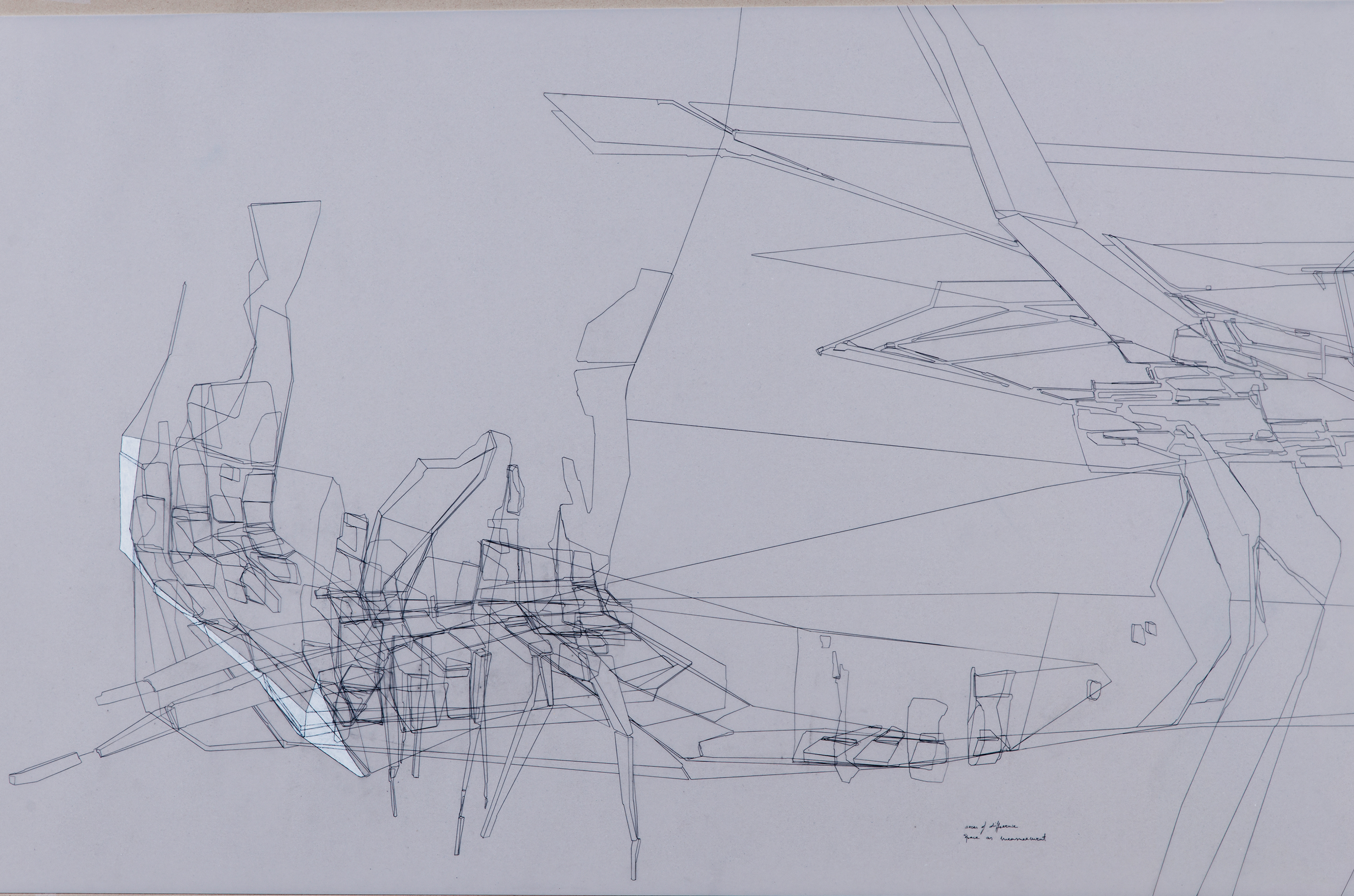
This practice is concerned with the relationship between and extends boundaries between observation, registration and representation. More specifically, the projects uncover an awareness of and investigate acts of design (or speculation) that occur in-between observation, registration and representation.

The fact that this performative space in-between is saturated with subjectivity and is based on ambiguous presumptions – what is it that you see? – forces an attempt to find 'devices' to hold on to.

These devices aid a search for inherent consistencies within the mechanics of a subjective spatial world.

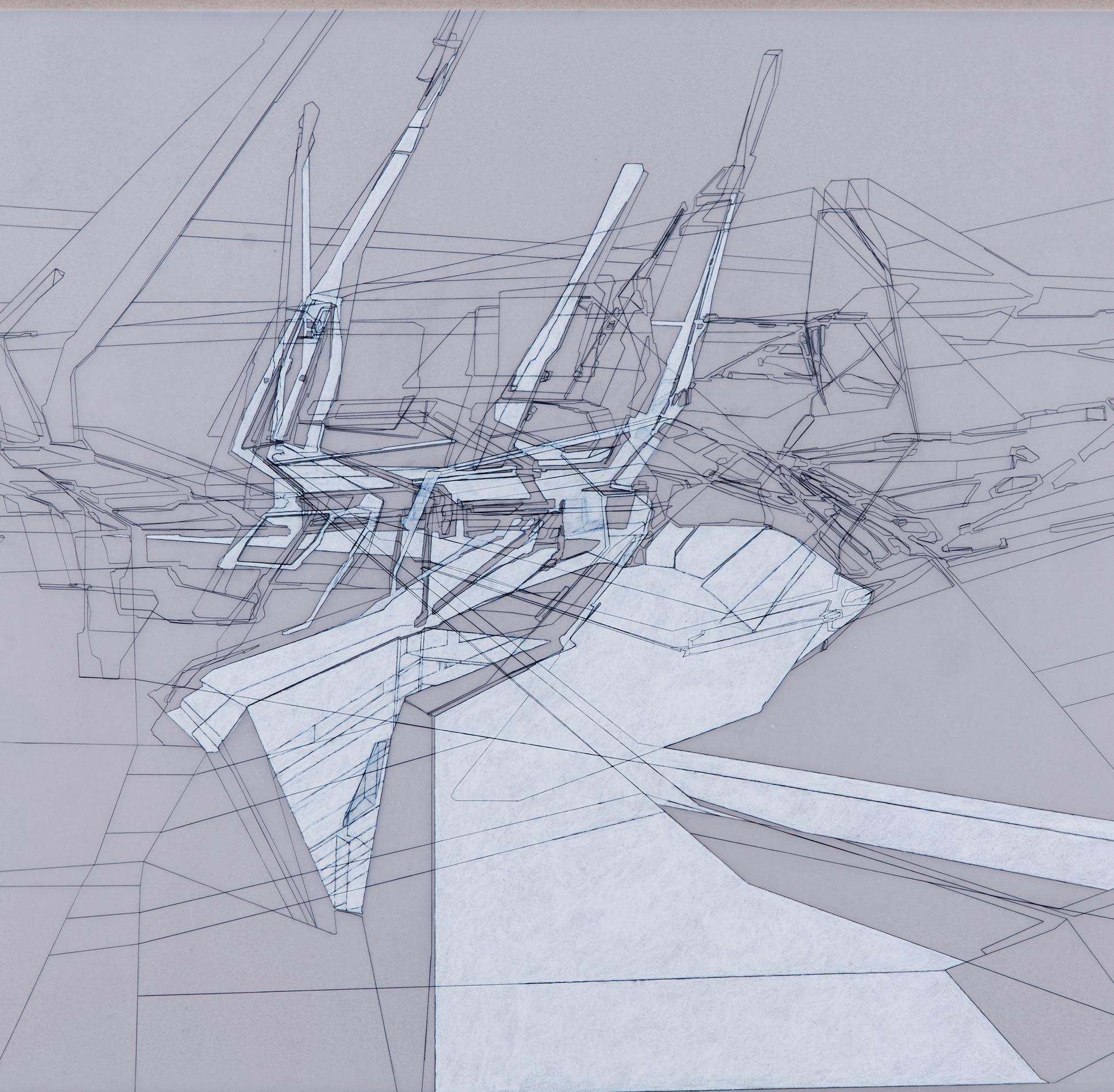
These devices I park under the activity of 'Process Drawing'. These devices: critical surrender, defamiliarisation, repetition and iteration, slowness,





scenes of difference  
space as measurement





## The Examination

### (4) the Figure/Ground relationship

*The figure-ground discourse is a classical discourse in the architecture discipline that deals with the relationship between architecture and the ground it sits on. A very intrinsic discourse for the discipline.*

*And then there are the appearance and disappearance of figures in my work.*

*The figurative nature of my work.*

*The figures in my work have multiple natures, my figures are the burdens of spatial intent.*

*My figures are the presence of purpose, my figures exist through assigned meaning, they are program and function.*

*But they can also be pure form. Articulated studied form. Recognizable form. sometimes even style. I am drawing and something is appearing in this drawn search. and I hold onto it.*

*These figures are chased for in some of the work and held onto as a validation necessary at that time. When these figures are chased out of the work, the work is relieved from validating burdens. I chase the figures out of the work to let the work search in less normalized environments, in search of the unfamiliar.*

*I overdraw drawings, I draw the figure out of the drawing.*

*I finish the last chapter of the ADR by saying that I am still in search of this fleeing figure. That figure that constantly appears and disappears.*

*Representation > traced selection of the representation>  
figurative in nature shifts through the notion of Point of View towards the figural*

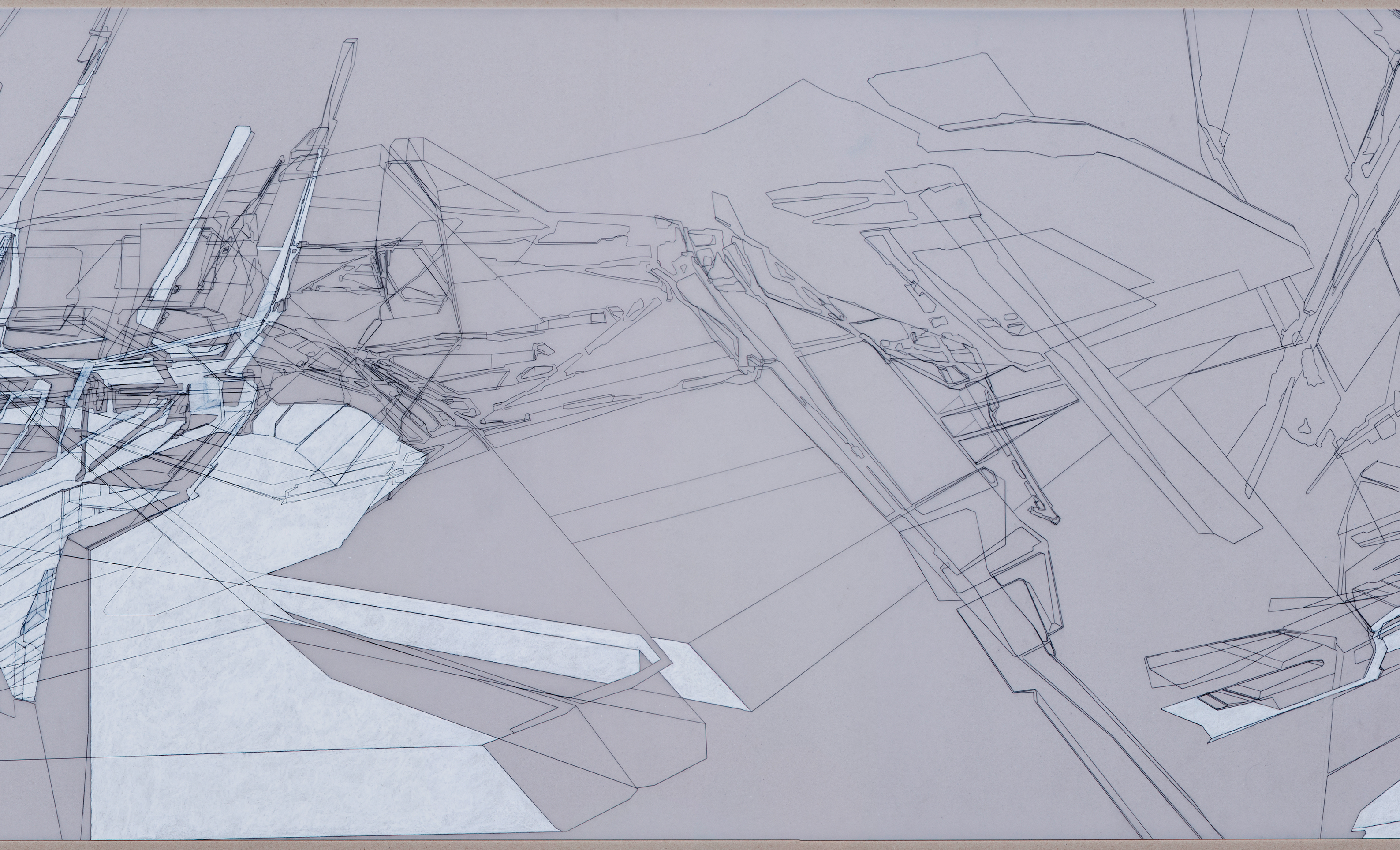
*When I chase the figure out of the drawing,  
I am in search of the capacity of process drawing,*

*I am looking for ways to engage with a given context in a manner which does not reduce the complexity of what is present and enables a tacit understanding of what presents itself.*

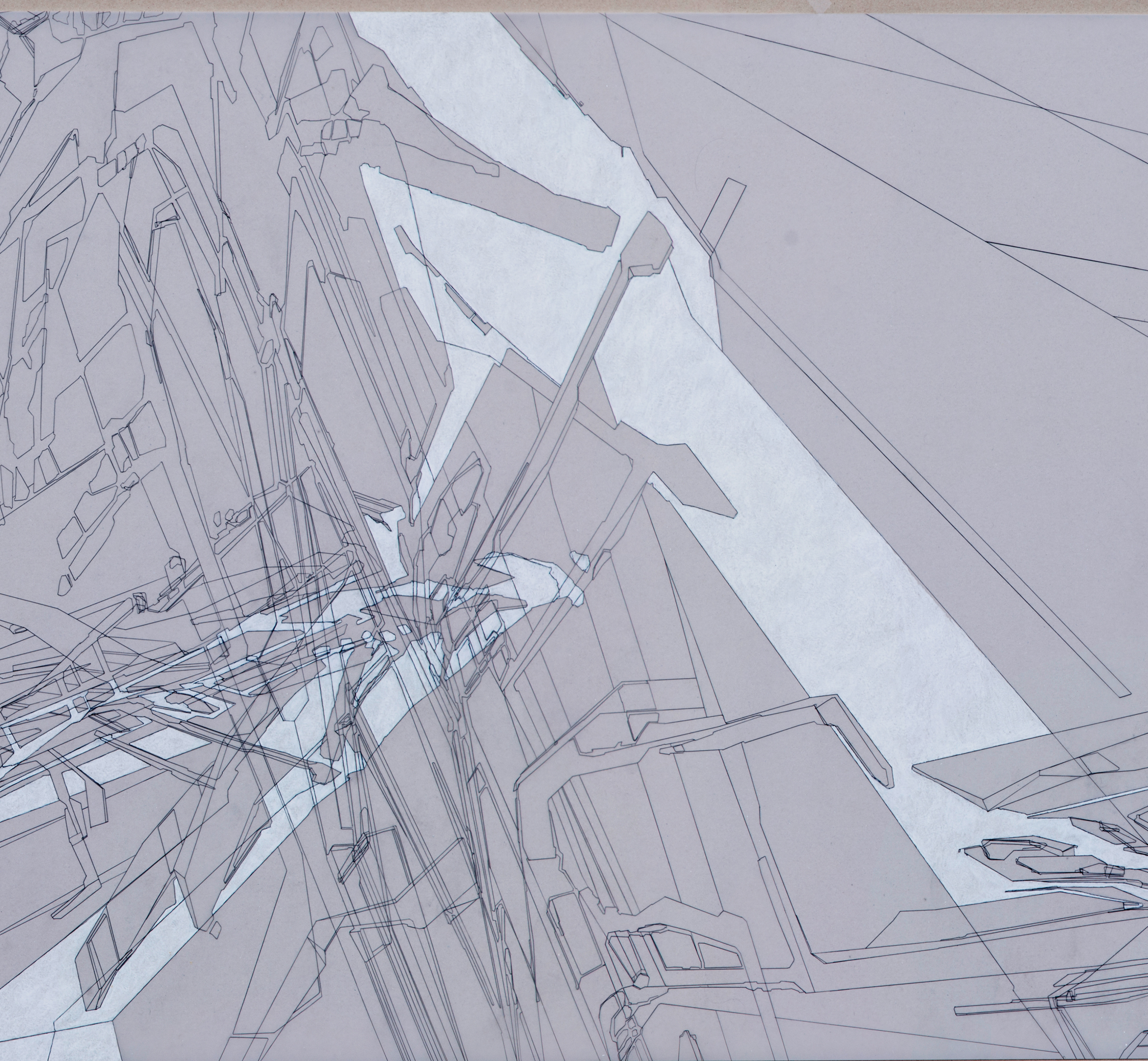
*The reason why is that I believe that by engaging comprehensively with what is present, one trespasses beyond what is visible and arrives in a speculative, performative environment that propels one's spatial intelligence necessary to respond.*

*I am looking for the capacity of observation to go beyond the representational*









## The Examination

### (5) Perceived Space

*My interest in the Figure Ground relationship stems from the interest in the performance of the 'figure' in a space. How a figure, a construct, an object, an architecture performs in the space it is placed in. How does the figure behave on his ground? How does the figure engage with the space? What is the performance of a construct? With the super-furniture in the ADR this principle is referred to as the 'interior performance structure'.*

*I bring this in relation to spatial experience. I attempt to approach spatial performance from out of the term 'perceived space' in reference to Lefebvre.*

*As an architect I am interested in spatial performance. I refer to it as spatial tension. Architecture that is capable of activating the void surrounding it.*

*The inquiry into spatial performance is absolutely connected to the experience of space.  
and for that reason I involve Lefebvre's terms Conceived space and Perceived space.*

*Conceived space is referred to as the space described in analytical measurable terms. -plan section, elevation. From the moment a person steps in and experiences the space, the space is perceived. We know very well how to handle, understand and represent conceived space. But how do we handle this perceived space? the spatial representations and notations used for conceived space do not suffice anymore.*

*Perceived space produces information that is unattainable for conceived space to represent. This is where I contextualise my research.*

*I first of all am in search of environments where this spatial performance or tension takes place. This is how i choose my projects.  
I find or make representations of them and then study them through drawing. One of the reasons I use film is because it articulates multiplicity. If there is anything sure about the characteristic of perceived space, than it is not about singularity.*

*I am in search of this perceived space that occurs between the observer and the observed.  
I make observational drawings and let them perform in their own language, the drawing. -within the space of the drawing. I set rules, self inflicted lateral routes that derail my ability to comply in conceived space. (Rotating drawings, enlarging figures till unrecognisable, ..) until they reach a pivotal point where they let go of their figurative nature and they present themselves in the drawing space.*

*I am in search of the figural nature of the representation to bring me closer to an understanding of perceived space.*



*In reference to Deleuze (The Logic of Sensation) who describes an interesting difference between the figurative and the figural. The figurative being illustrative with the narrative character of representation. Figurative implies a relationship of an image to an object that it is suppose to illustrate.*

*Drawing the figural, is an attempt to draw spatial sensation.  
(Deleuze describes it as pure form: two ways of doing: through extraction and isolation.)*

*The drawing evolves towards an absence of narration of space that had been compiled by conceived space. This figural presence sheds light on the sensations of space and is experiential in nature: perceived space.*

*The drawing is in search of the fleeing figure.....It is that tension between the narrative of space and its sensation that interests me. (Chasing the figure in and out of the drawing)*

*What I draw is engrained with the specificity of the situation (the complexity of the specific), it exists in that performative or speculative space between me and the object. I start with the figurative. I start with the representation, a figurative state of the situation. And I keep drawing and redrawing in repetition and iteration till I draw through the representation and the drawing becomes figural in nature.*

*I refer to this arrival as the ground that speaks of the figure's passing.  
In this case on the table, the ground being the space of the drawing and the figure being the footage I took of the artists performance.*

*(6) The ground that speaks of the figure's passing  
In this spatial exploration towards perceived space, the Architecture has shed its burdens and exercises configurations of what is for me resistant spatial content: (essential residues)*

*The tension between solid and void*

*The articulation of boundary (layered depth) and boundary thickness  
i draw in closed boundaries with one line thickness. Lines or surfaces are not open ended. All lines articulate boundaries. Sometimes they form areas of sameness, sometimes they form areas of difference.*

*The tension of spatial proximity*

*Spheres of influence, presence and absence  
Directional force (or the engagement with the perspectival resulting in spatial depth)*

*Impetus and resulting Impact*

*And ultimately there is the line*

*The line.*

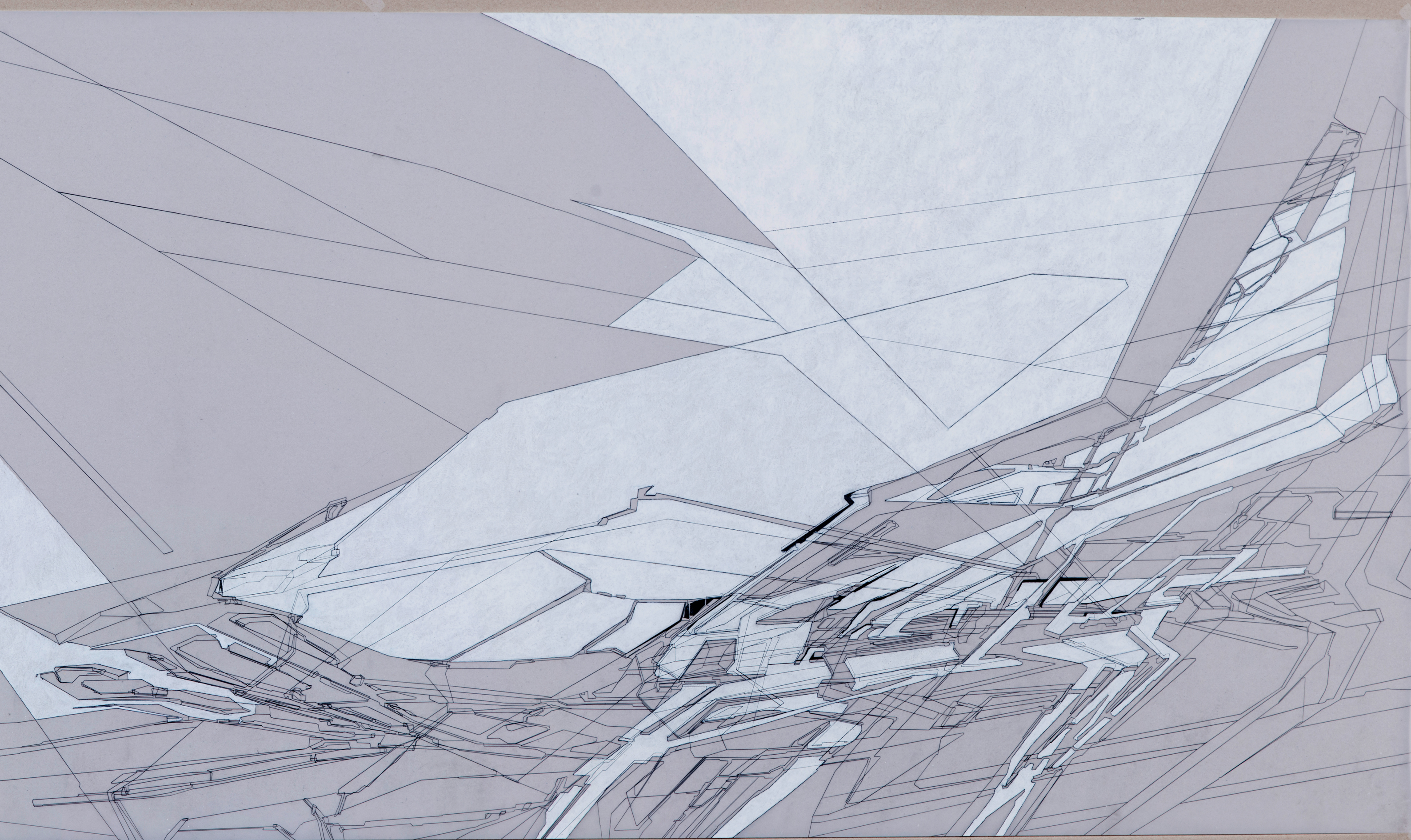
*The line stands central to how the spatial content is build up.*

*There is no symmetry, no overly cerebral geometrical forms,  
There is the constant re-negotiation of composition with every line that is drawn. The process is like a situation unfolding with all of its circumstantial complexity , some things appear and some disappear, some things are fore fronted and then slide into the background.*

*The constant re-negotiation of spatial intent during the process is grounded in the basic premise how one spatial element gives rise to another.*

*28 November 2014*











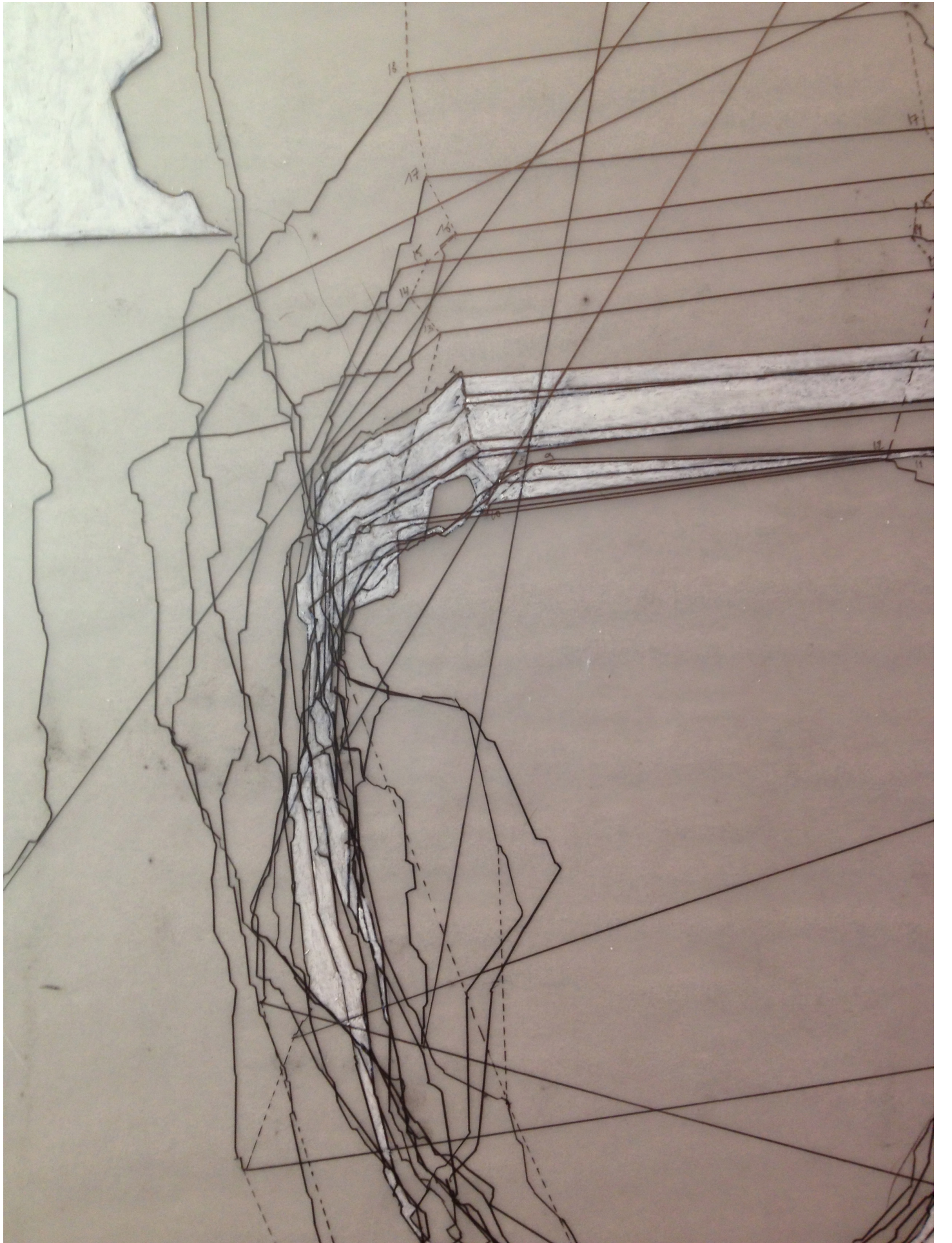
The following pages include photographs used to produce '*The Space Between His Head and His Two Hands*': work in progress photographs used in the process to draw from and interrogate the drawing's content.

'*The Space Between His Head and His Two Hands*' is a collaborative project with and drawing from the work of Marc Godts.









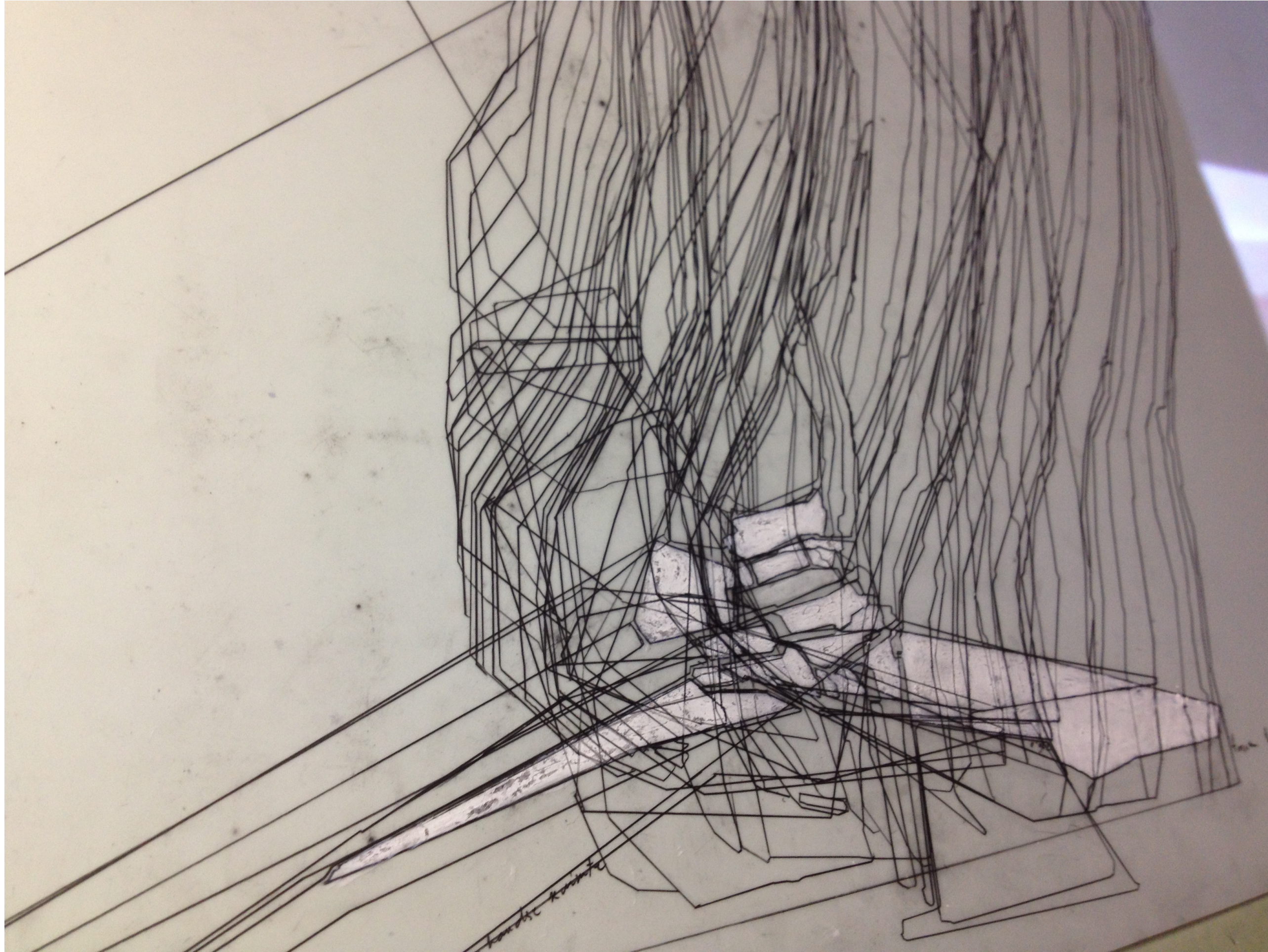




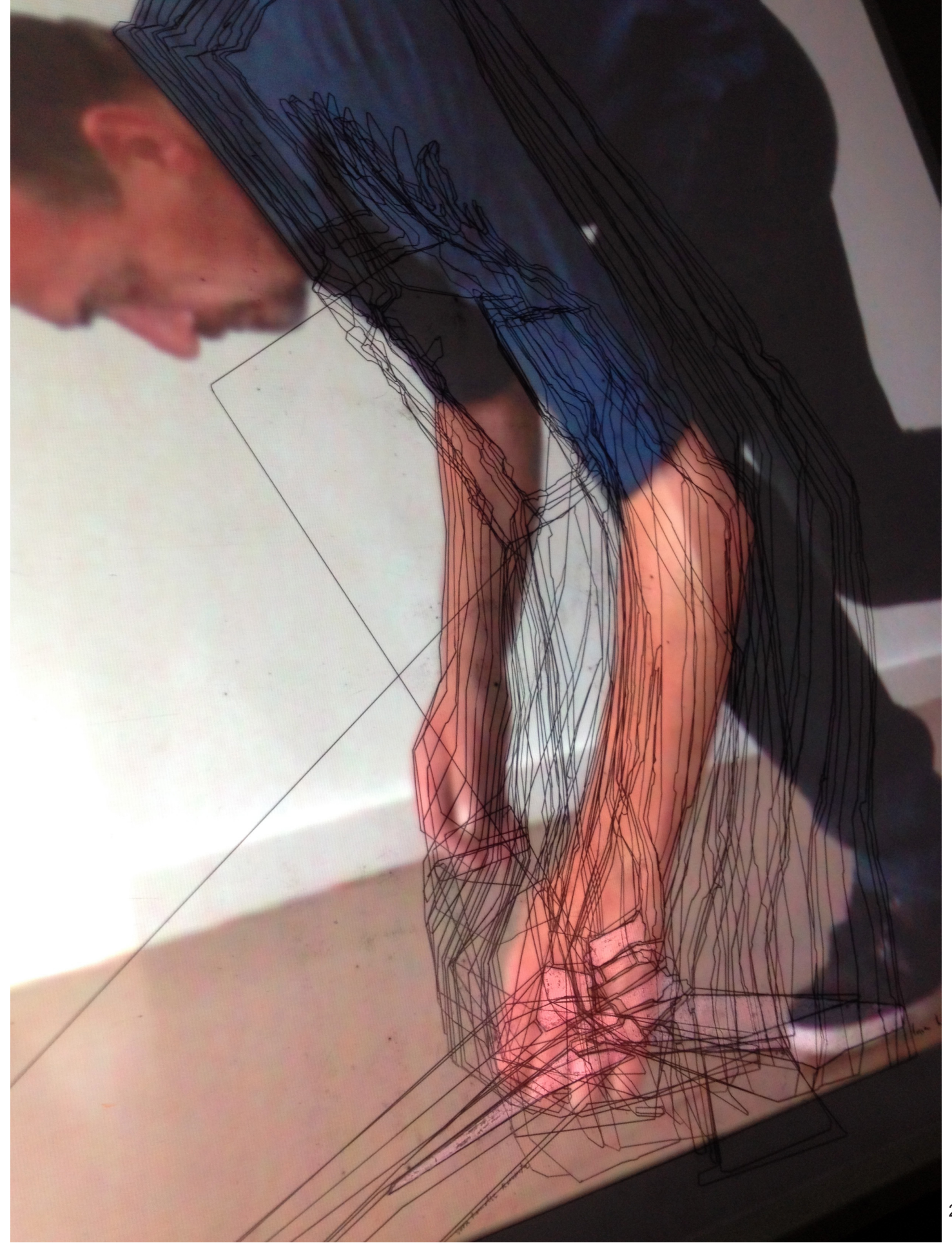




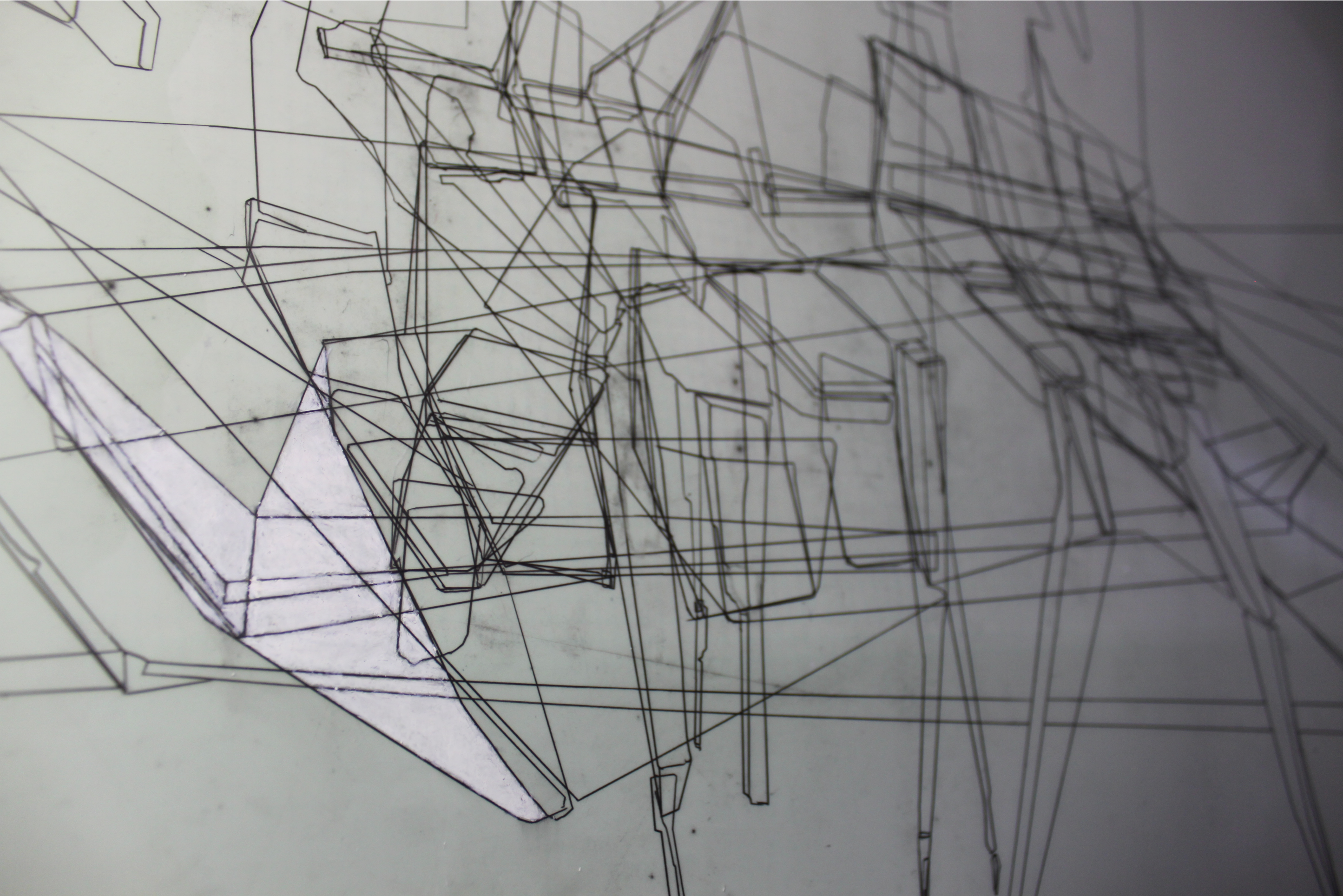




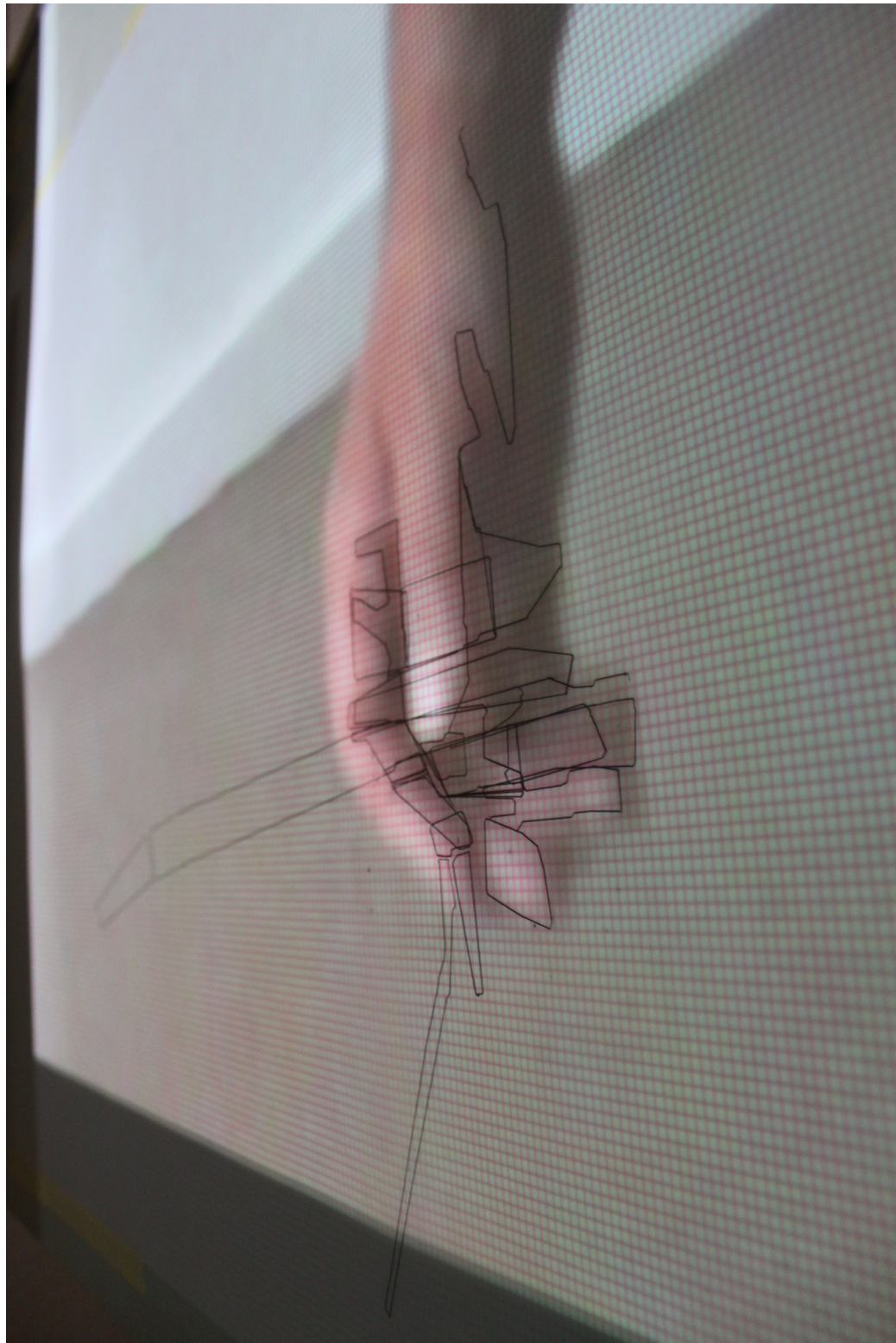
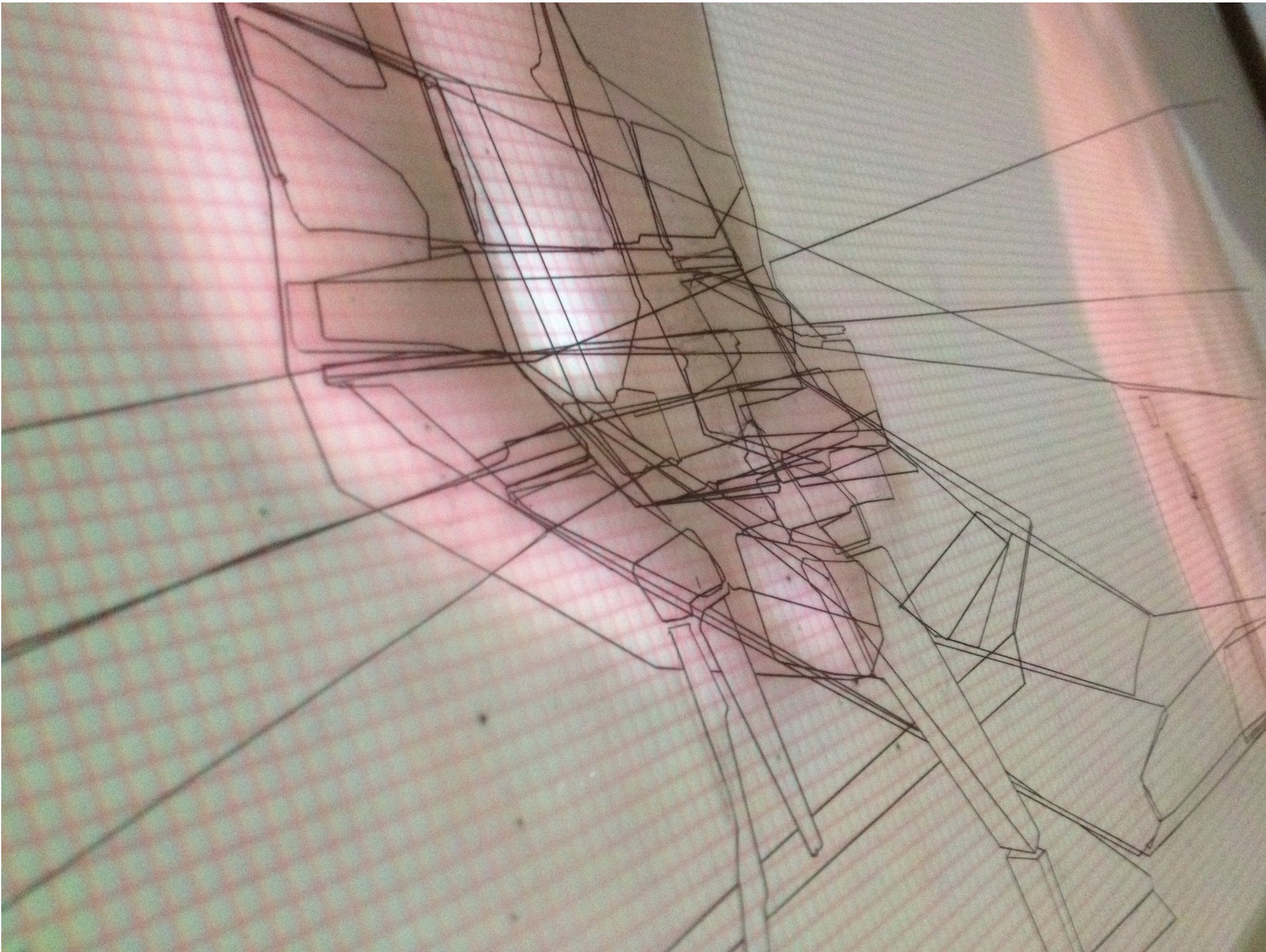




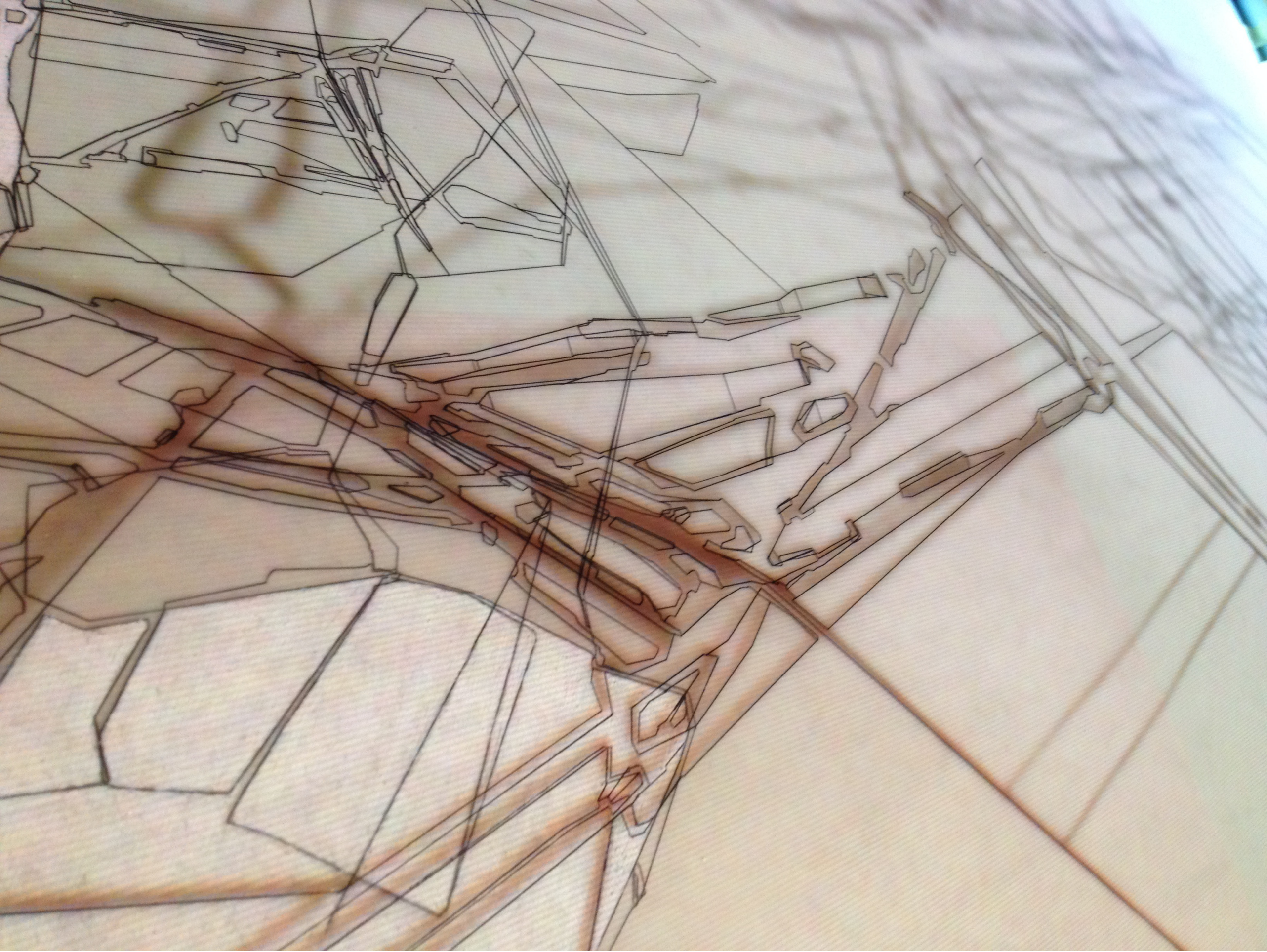




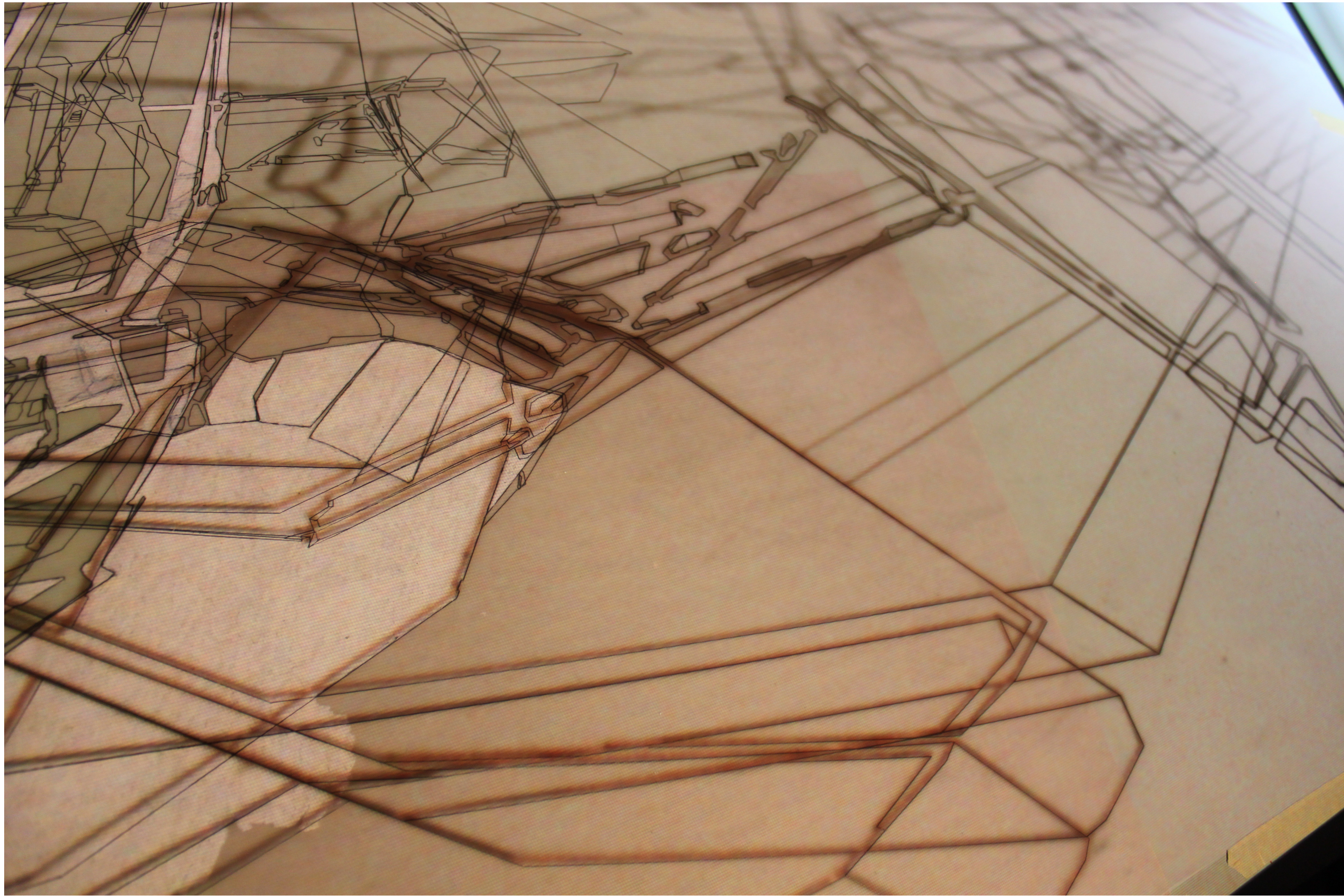








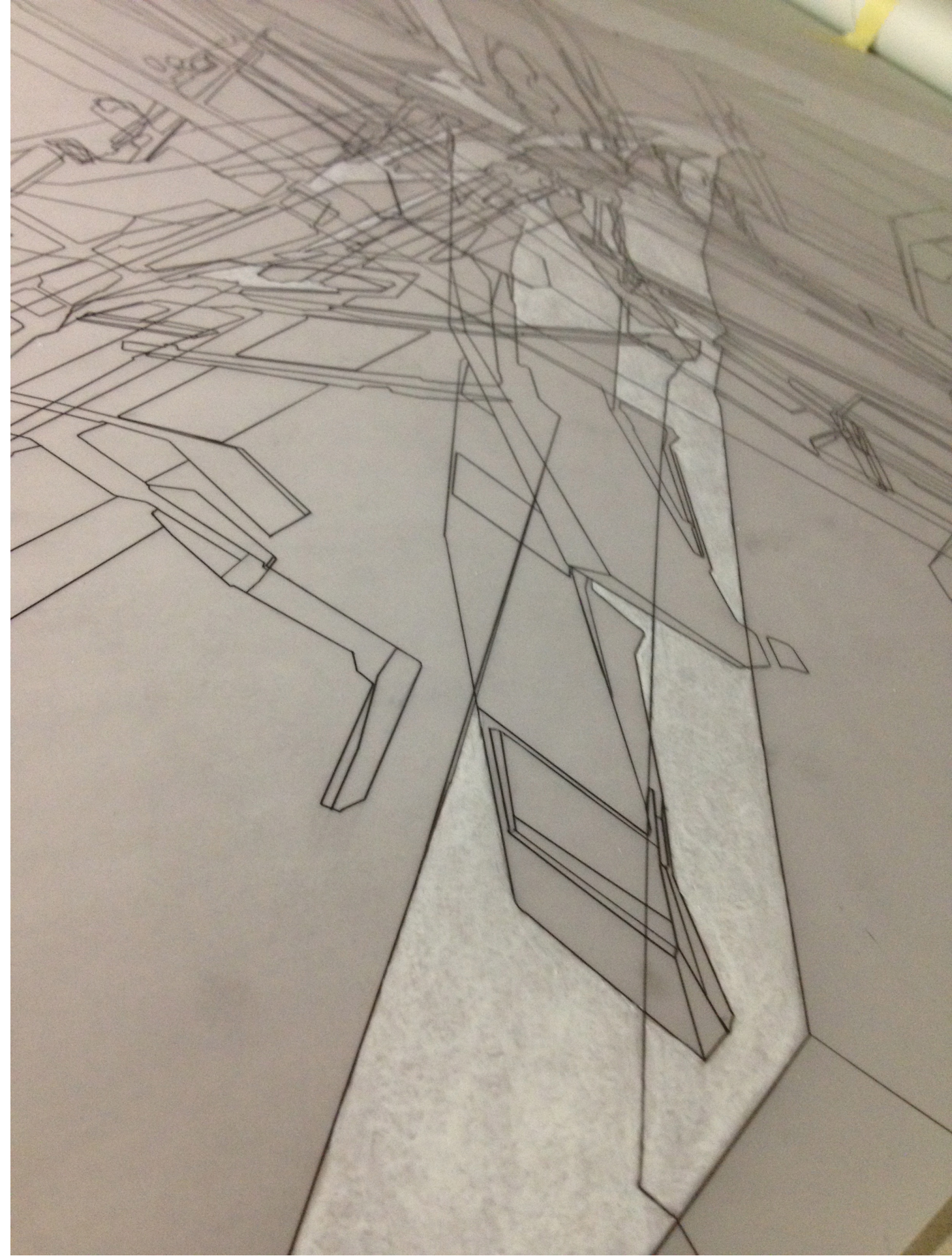
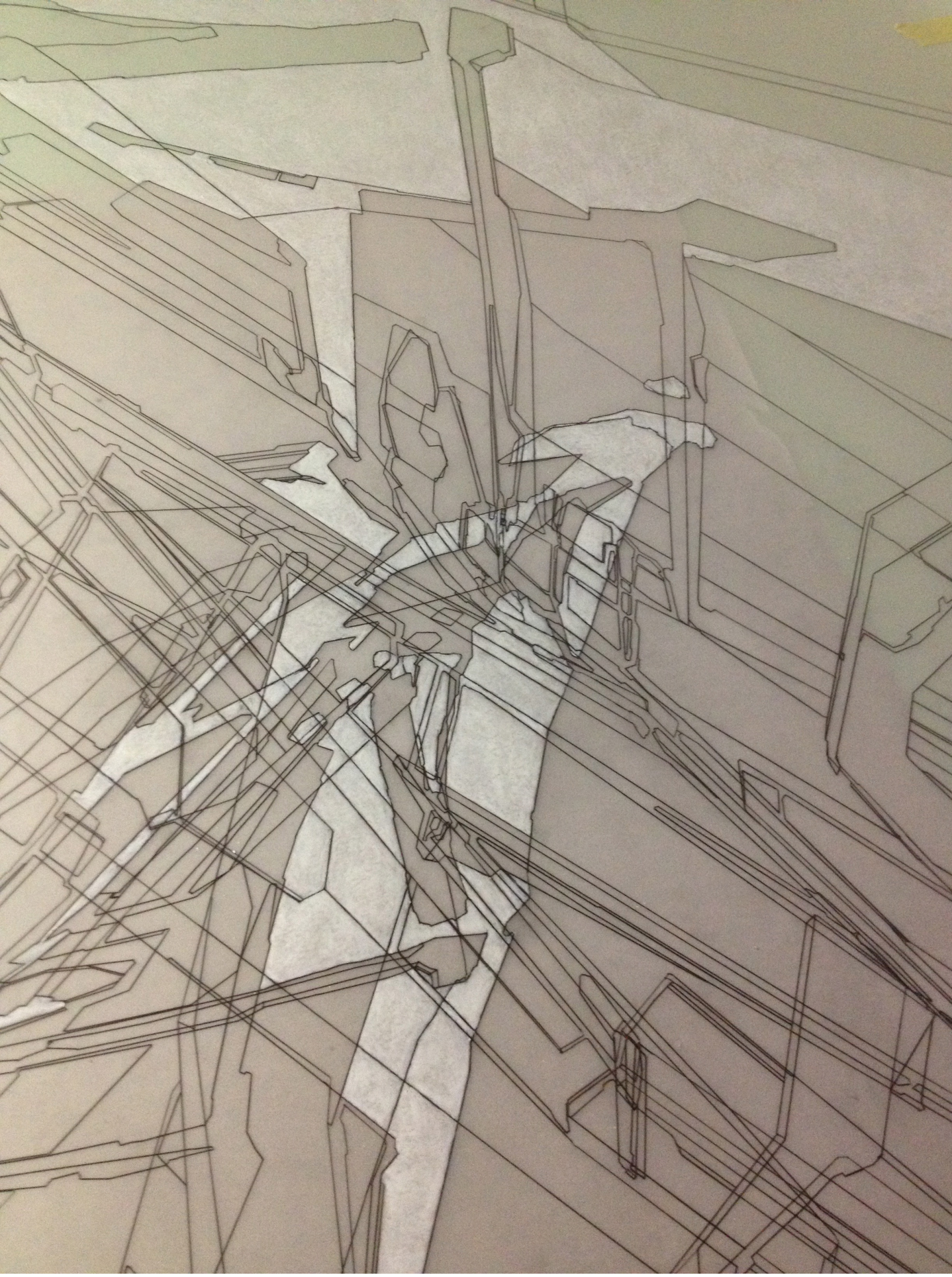




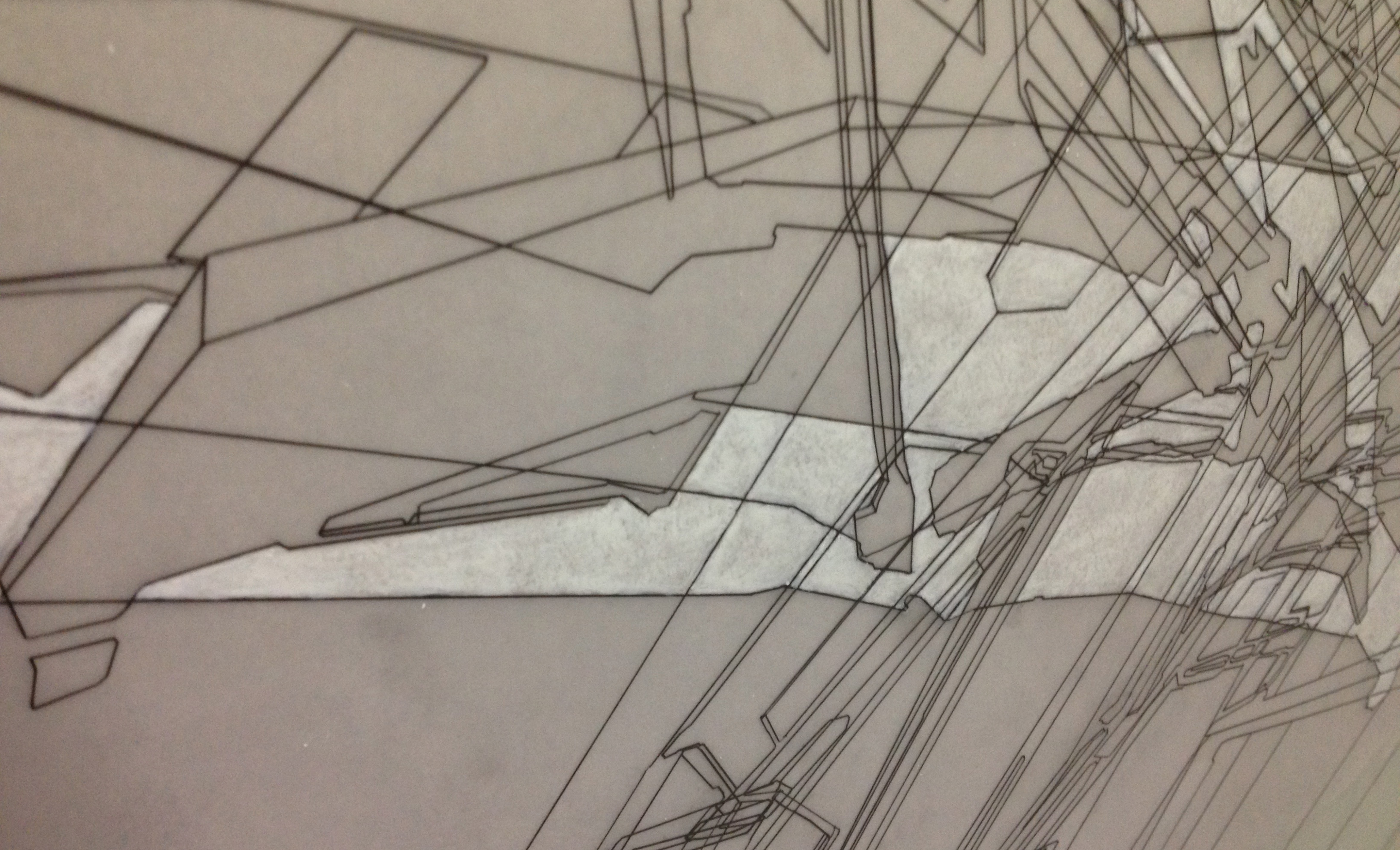




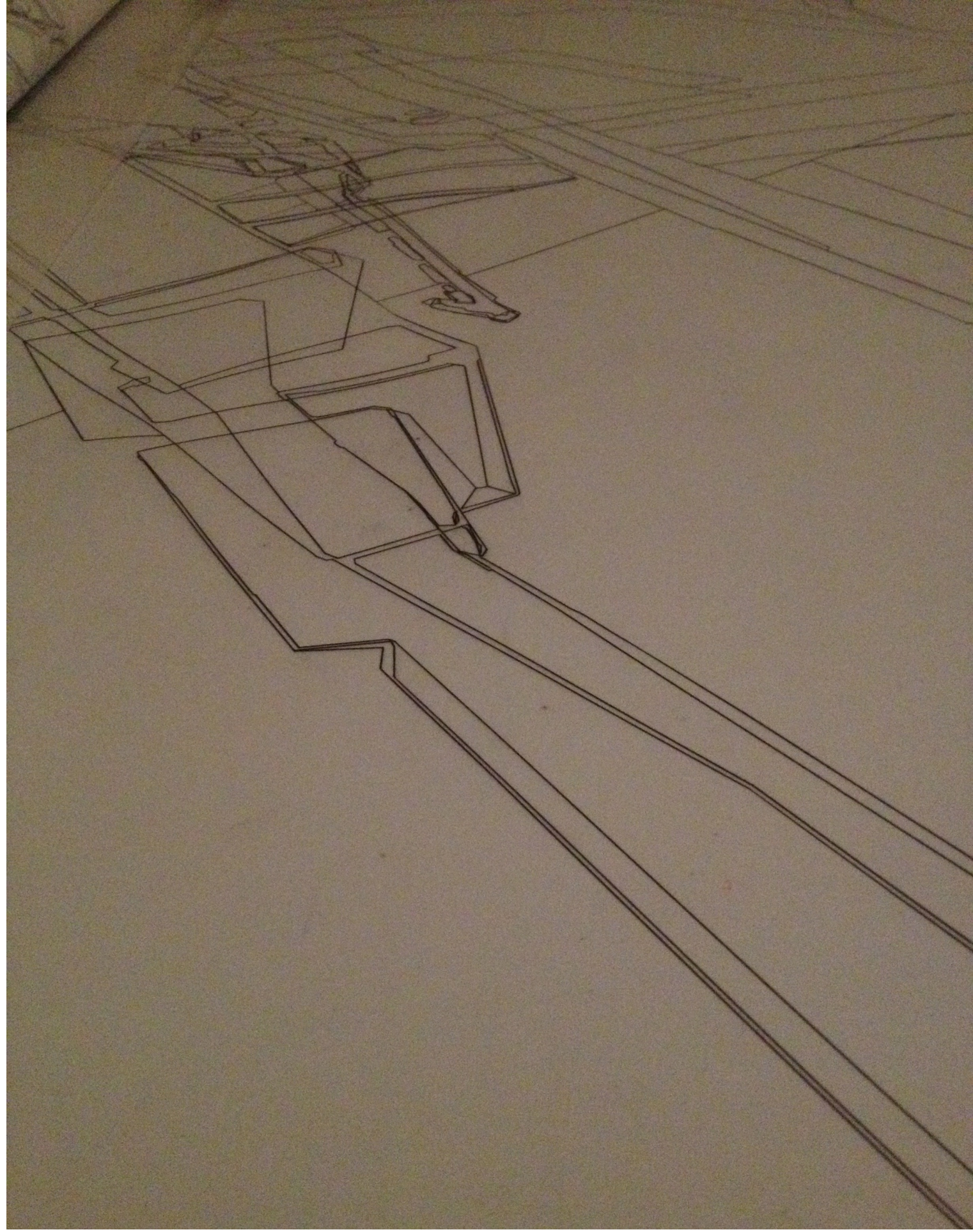
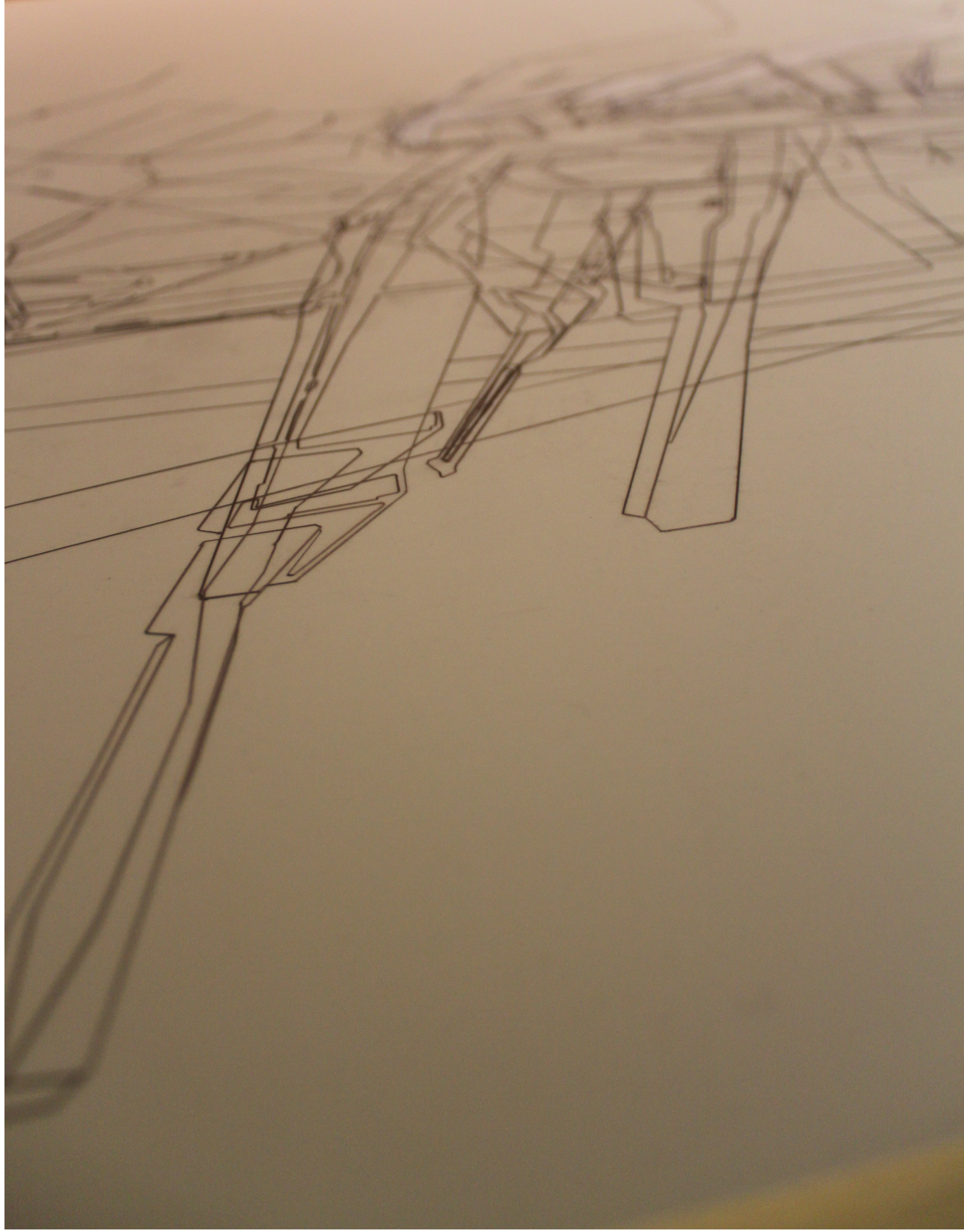




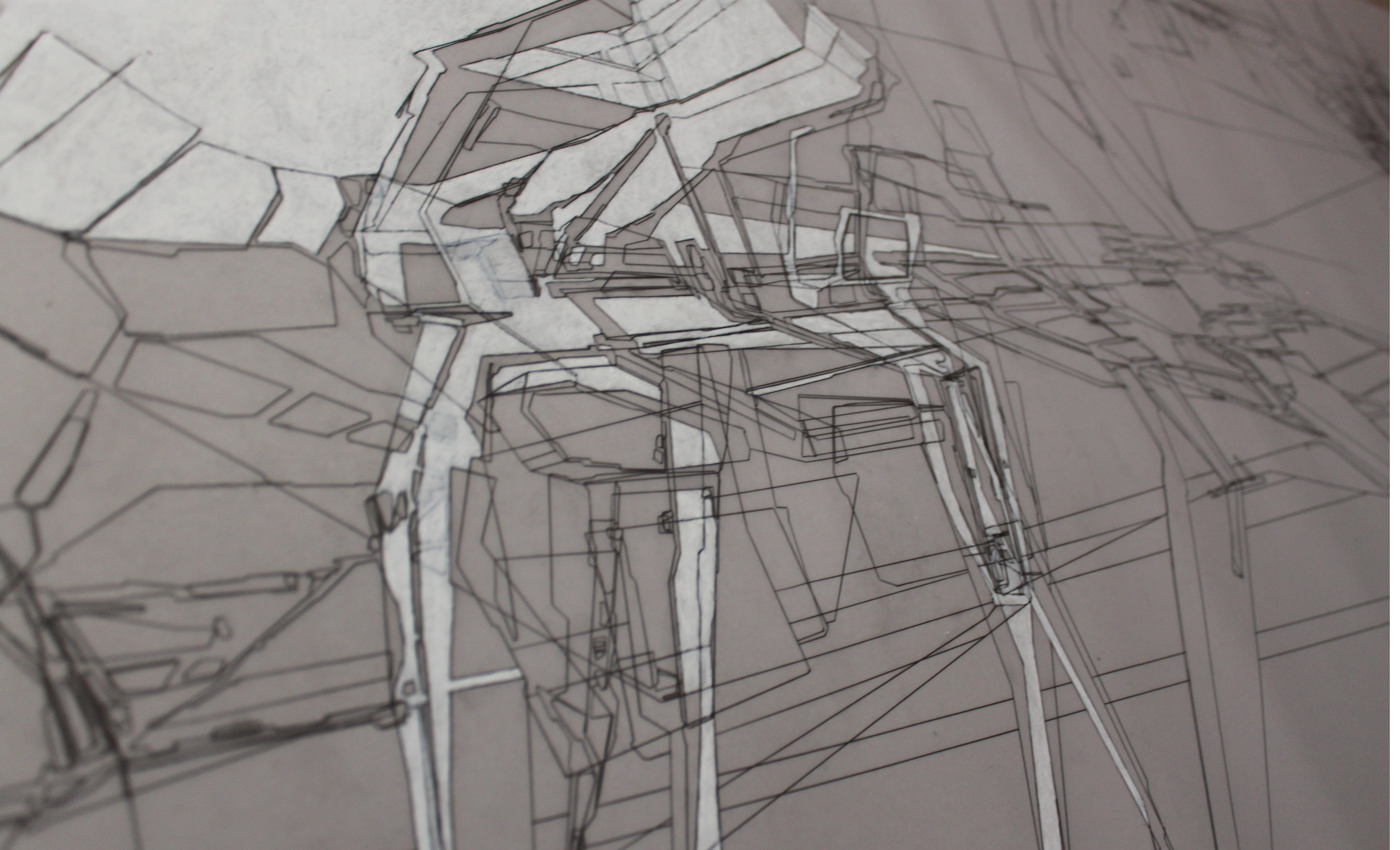




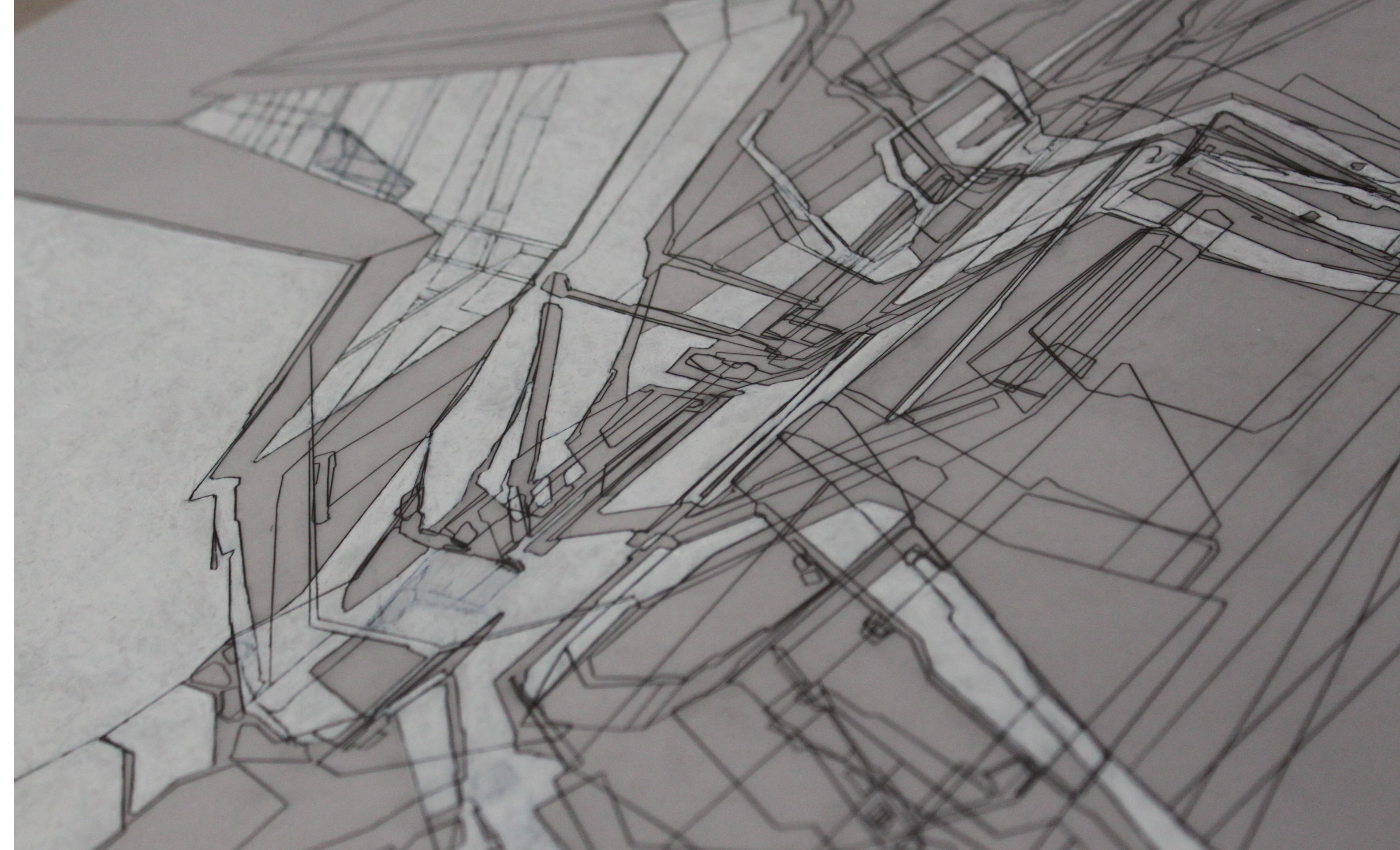




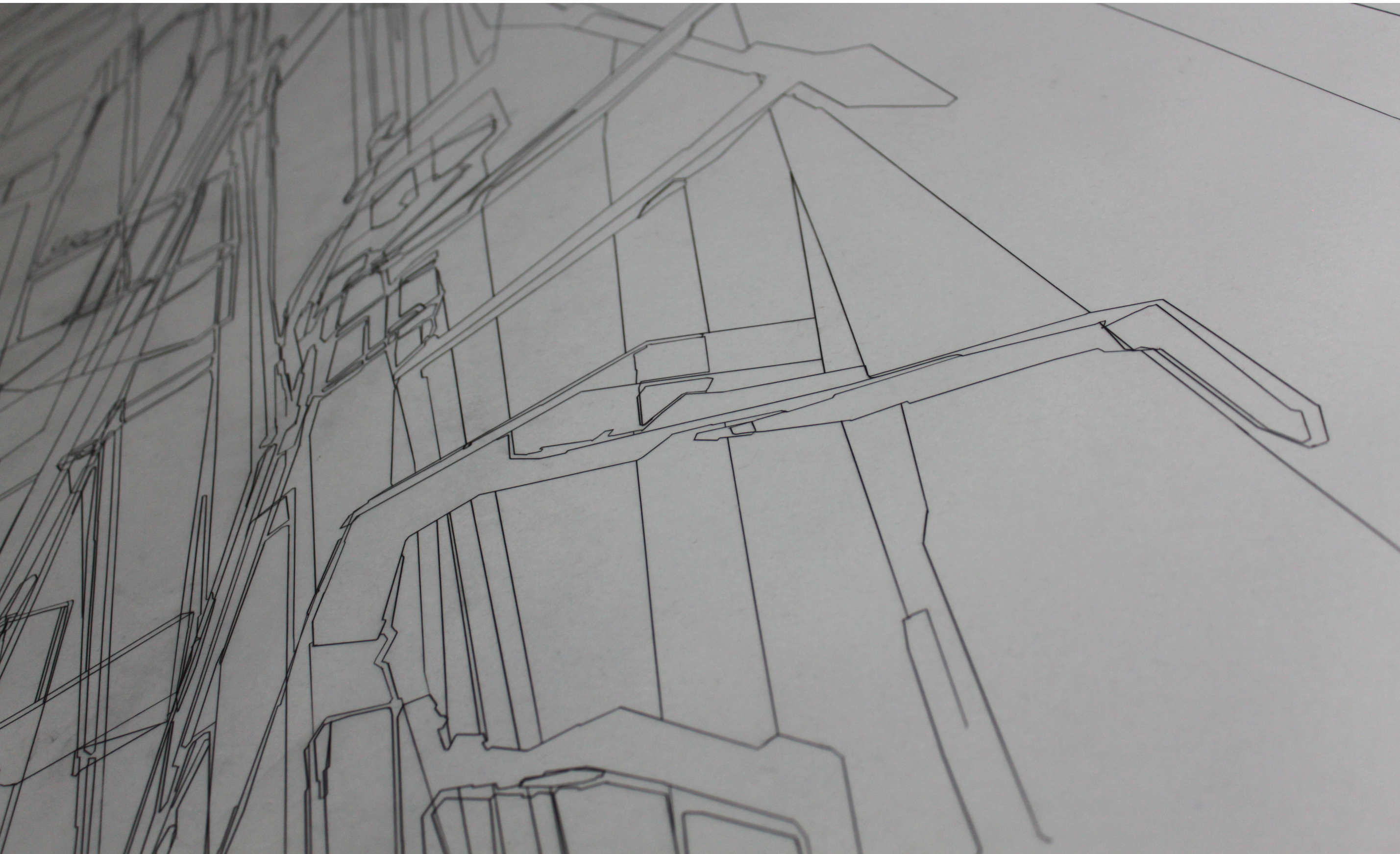




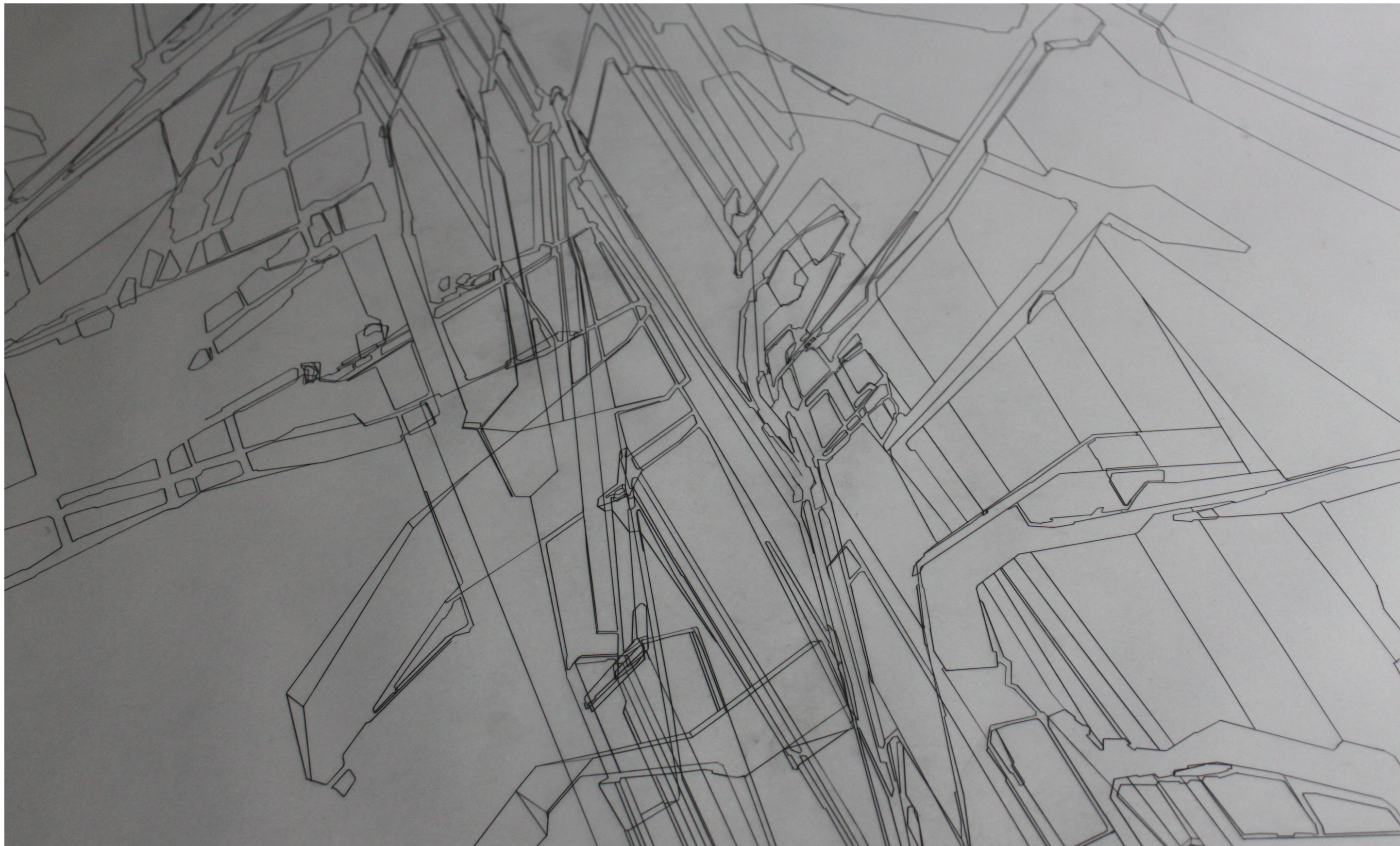








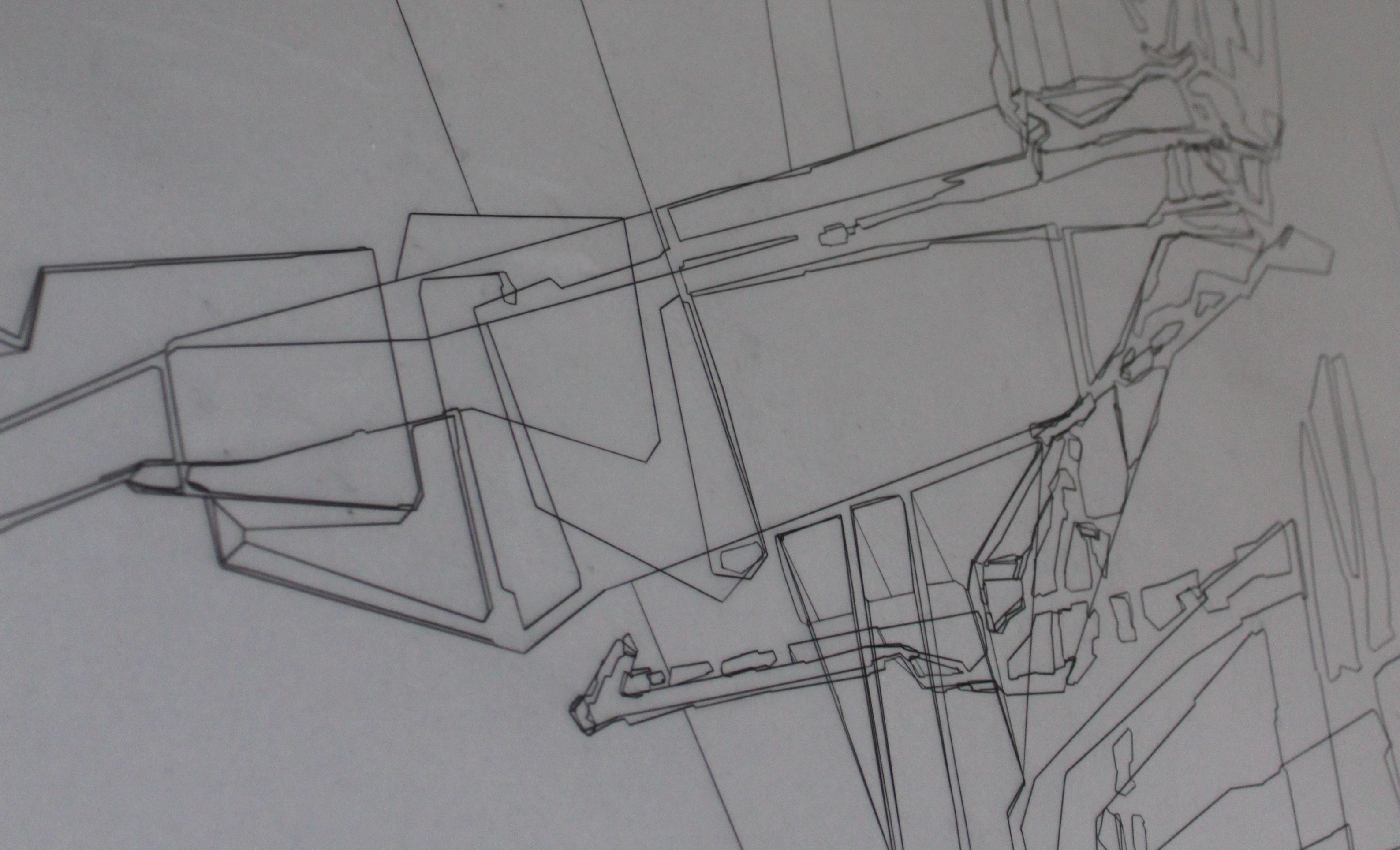




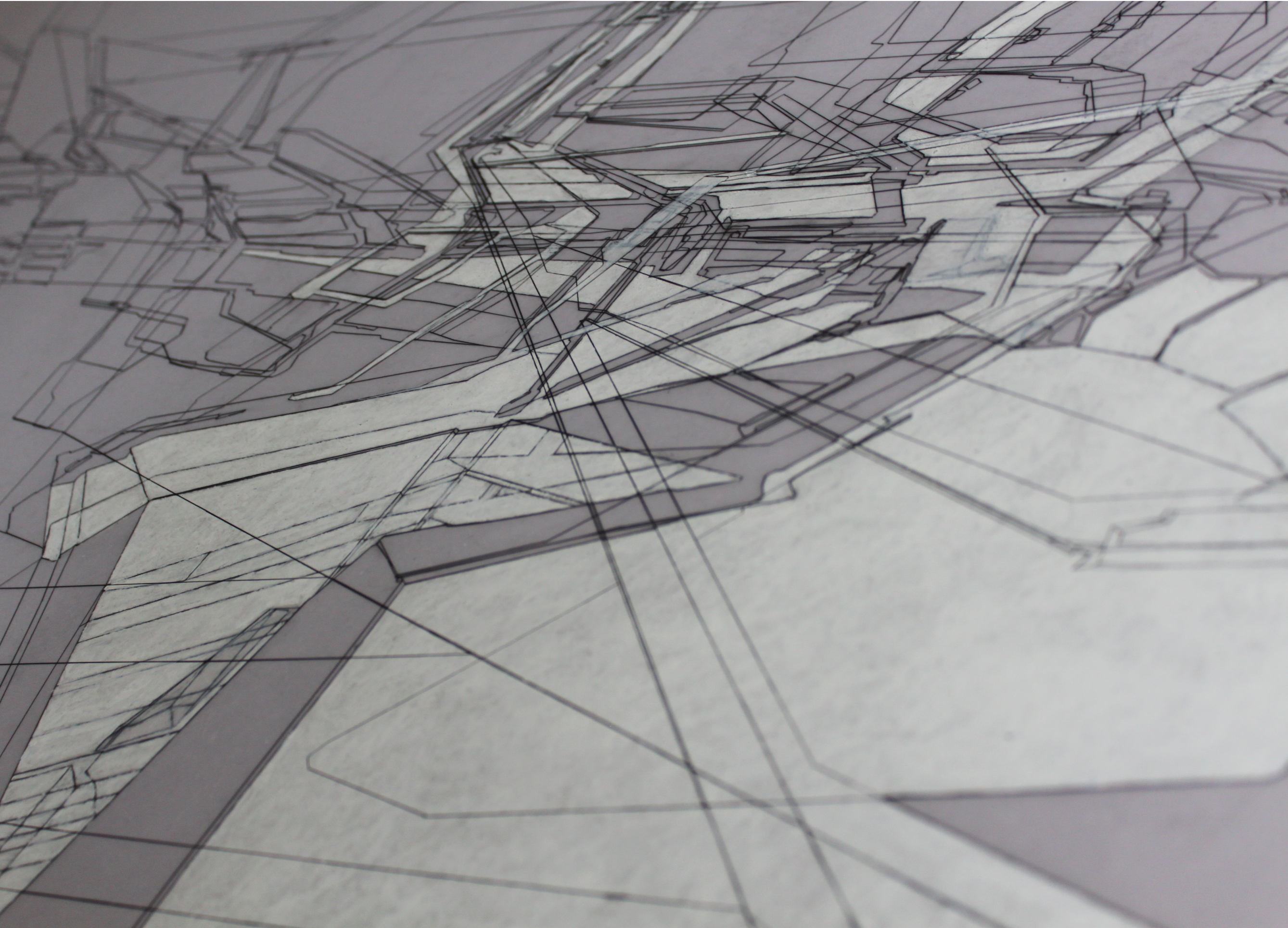




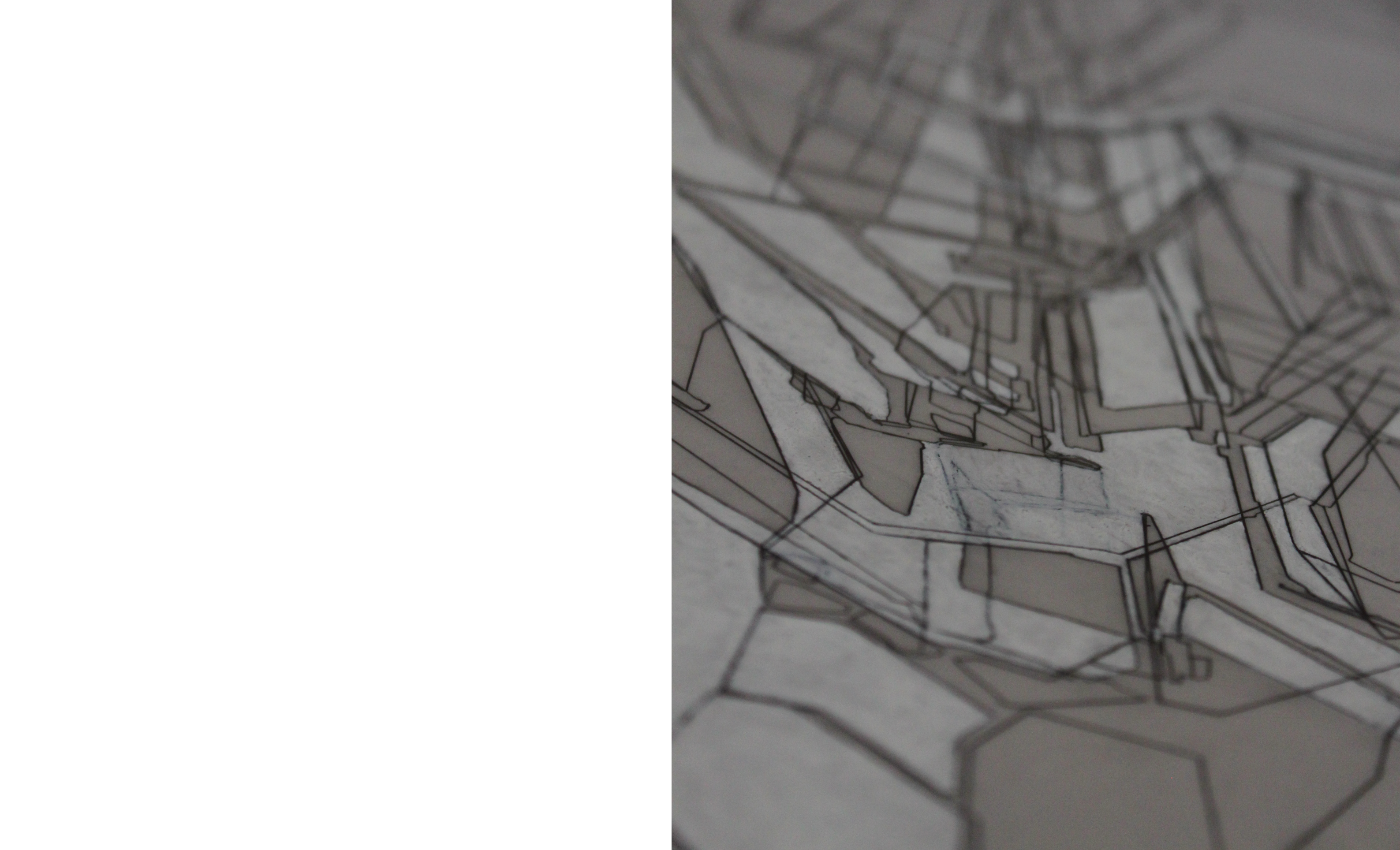




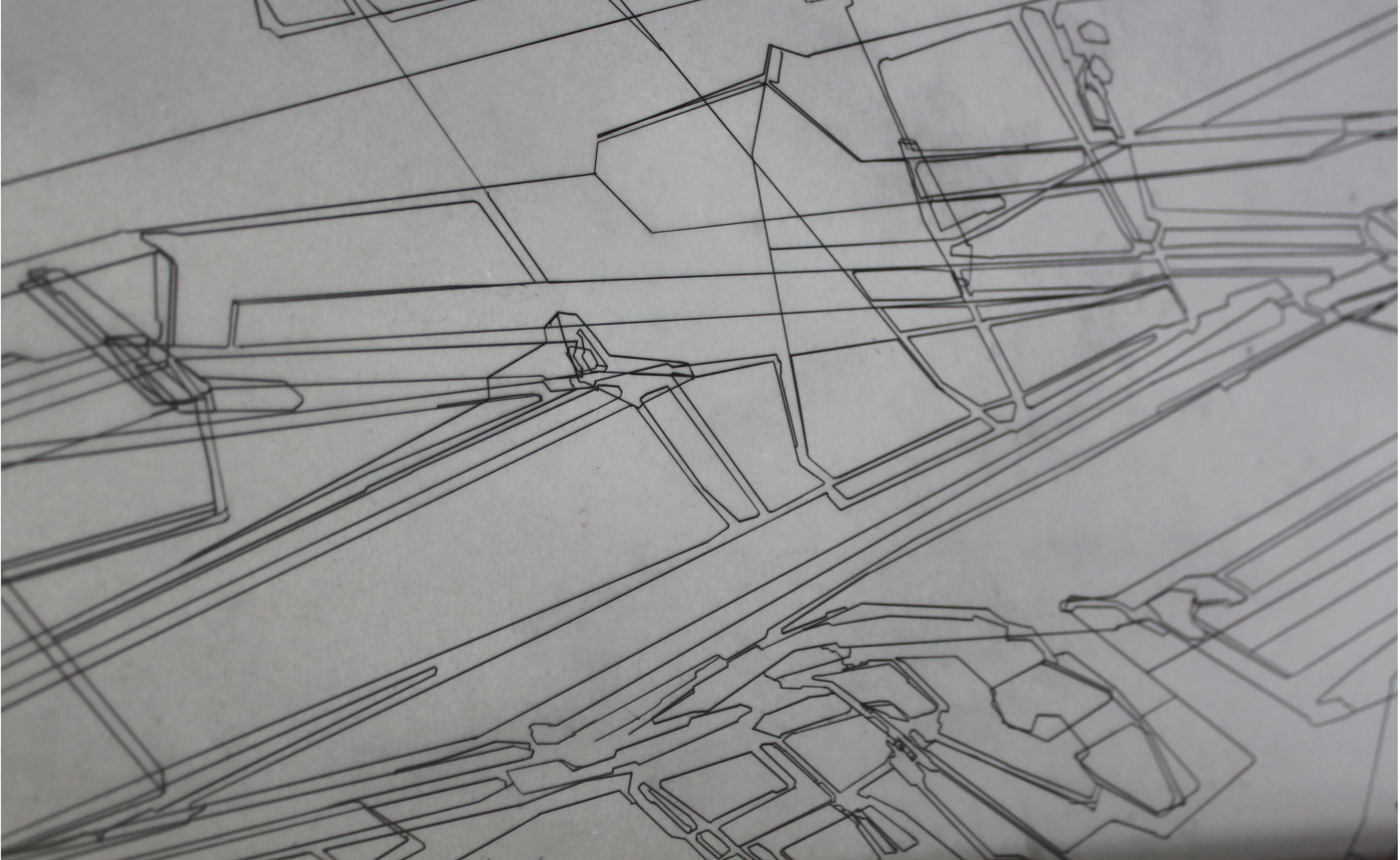




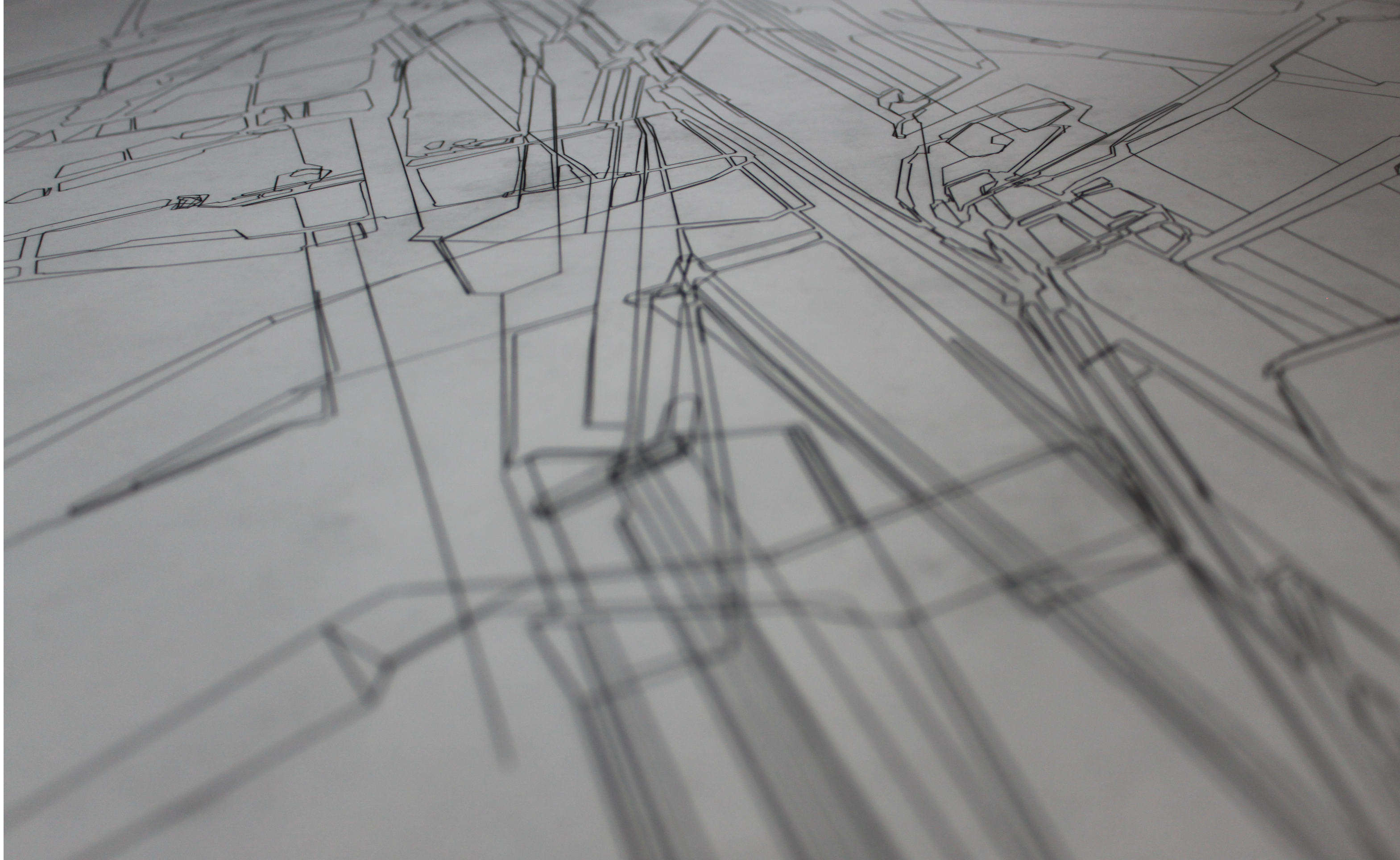








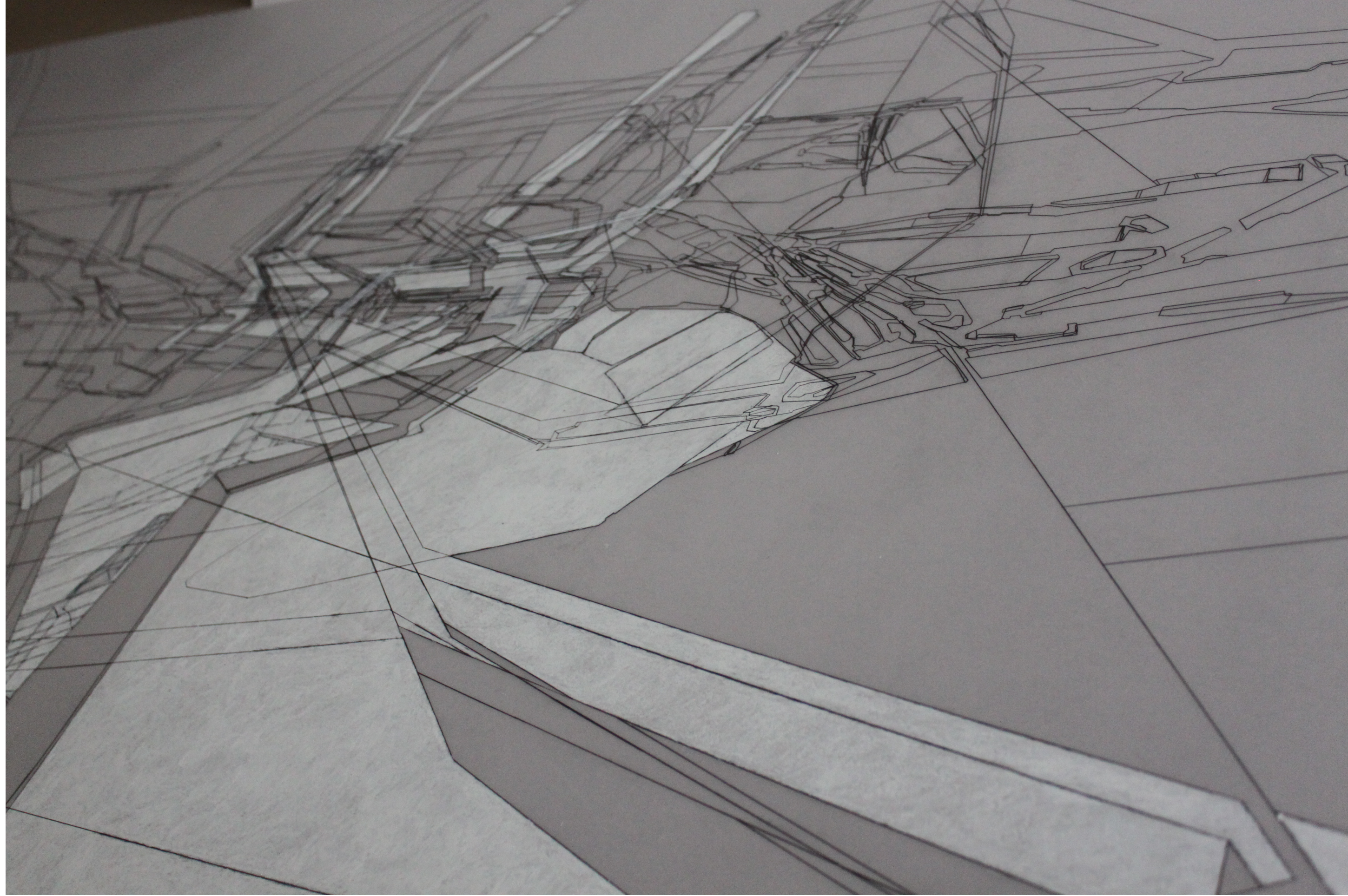




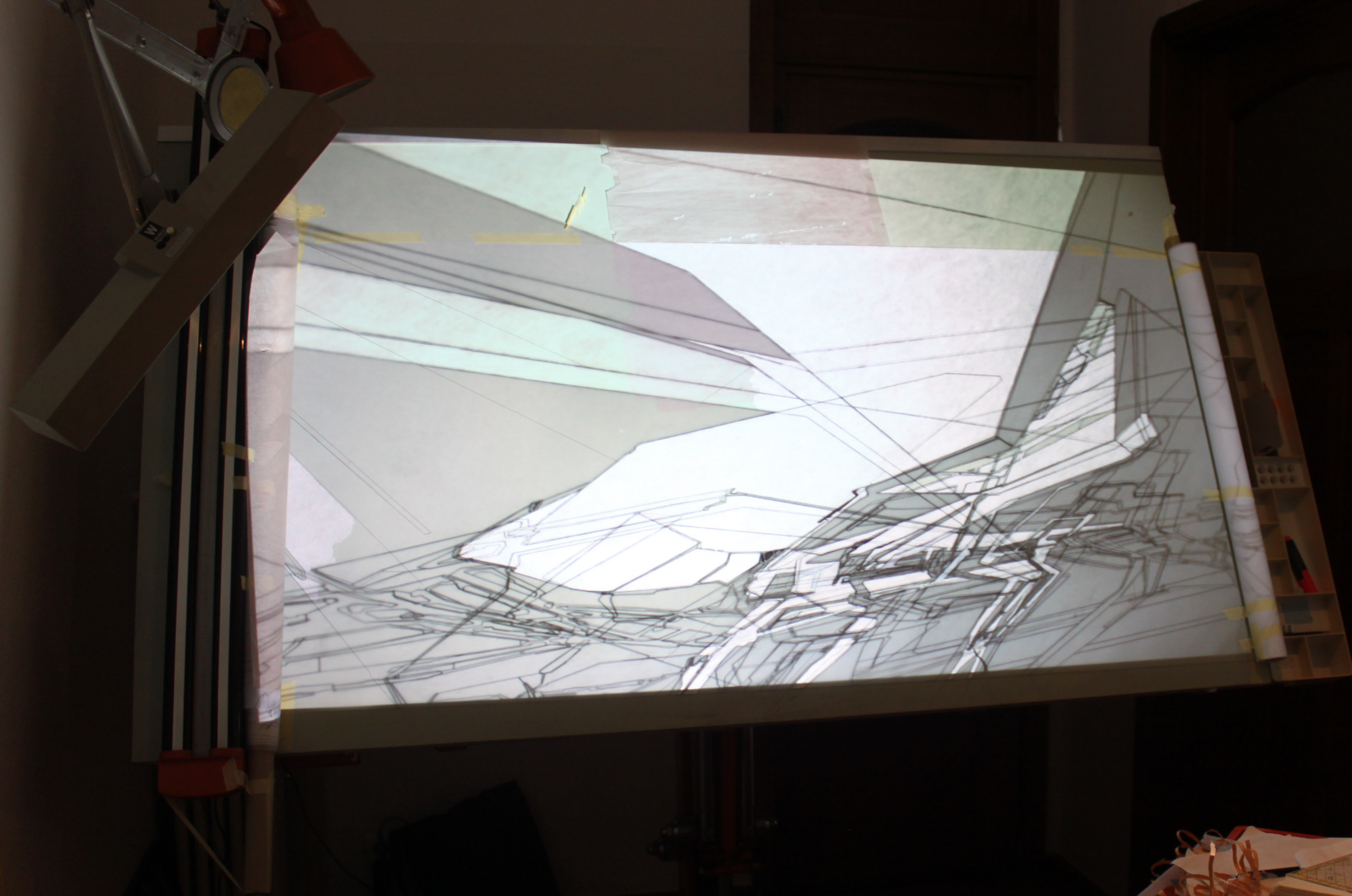




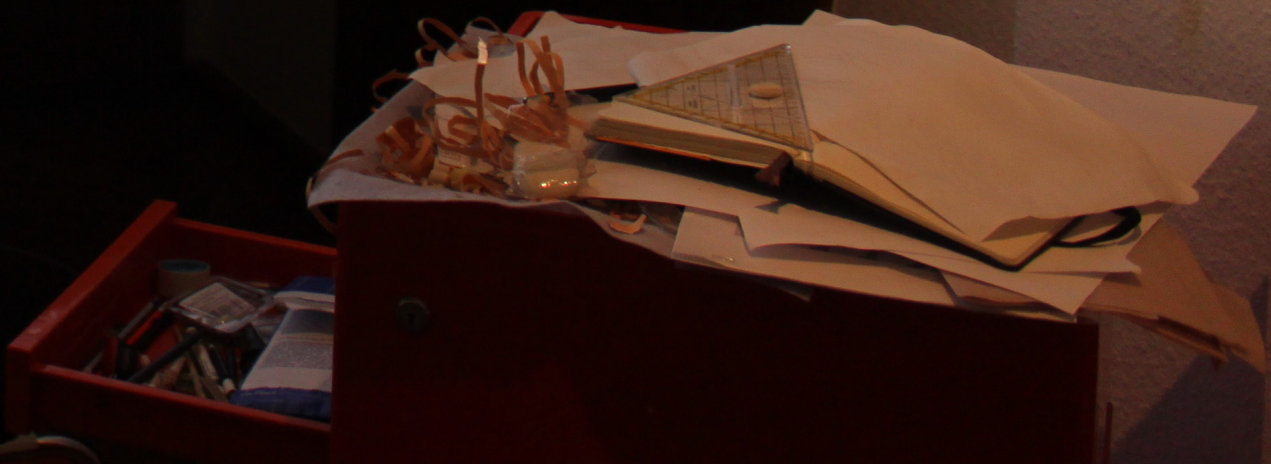




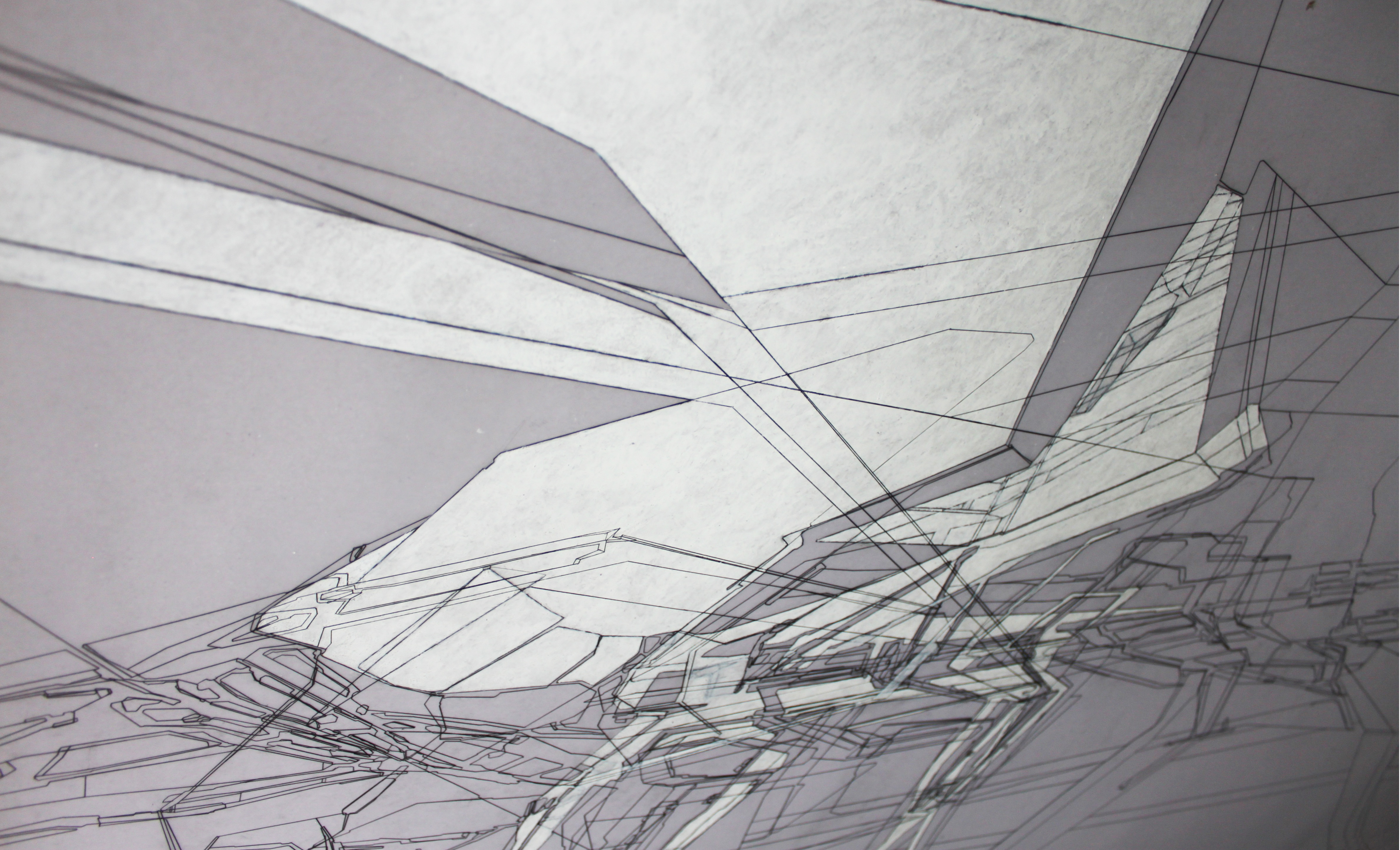




Handwritten notes on a piece of paper taped to the wall. The text is written in red ink and appears to be a list of points or a series of short paragraphs. The paper is crumpled and has some other markings on it.













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